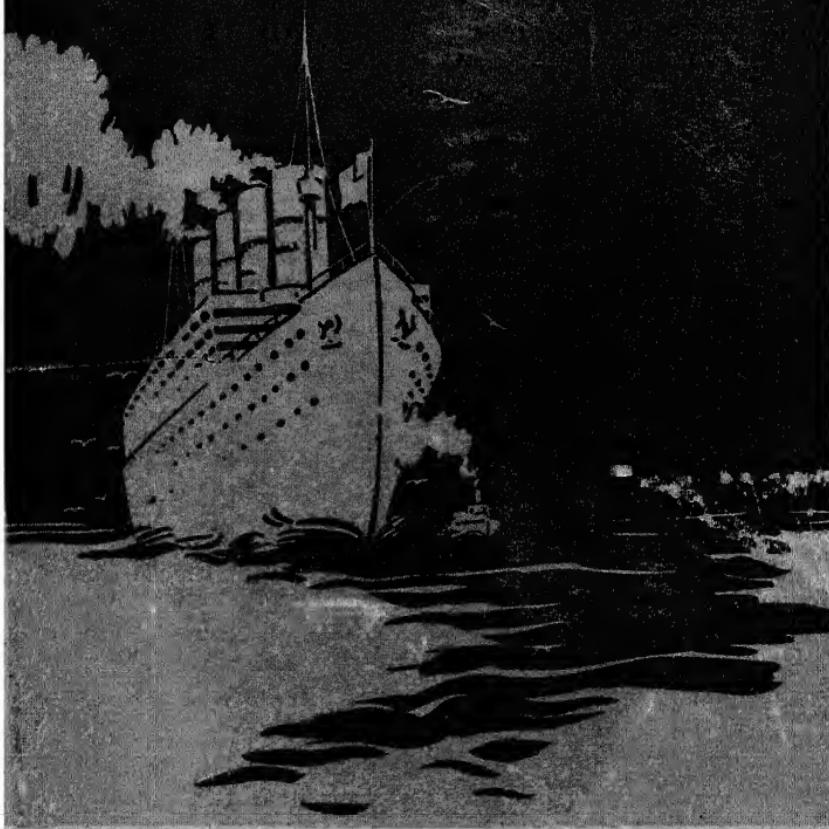


The
**SLAVIC IMMIGRANT
WOMAN**



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The Slavic Immigrant Woman



A SLAVIC IMMIGRANT WOMAN

The Slavic Immigrant Woman

BY

BESSIE OLGA PEHOTSKY

CINCINNATI, OHIO
POWELL & WHITE

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TO
MY MOTHER

PREFACE

There is no lonelier person in American life than the Slavic immigrant woman. Separated from the old home, bewildered in the new, she lives her life in a confusion of strange problems in which she needs the help of Christian women. But unless we know her and her cares we cannot help. This little book draws aside the curtain of the Slavic home and reveals the inmost life of the Slavic woman. It tries not only to state her problems but to help solve them in a practical way. It is our wish that as Christian women read these pages they will forget the differences of language and nationality and see the Slavic Immigrant Woman only as a Woman.

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I

THE SLAVIC IMMIGRANT WOMAN

Whence Come They?

THE gang-plank was lowered. Hundreds of eager faces were turned toward it. At last, nothing separated them from America, the land of the free and the home of the brave! There were Italians, Jews, Scandinavians, Irish, Slavs, Syrians, Portuguese; all coming to make their homes in America. Long had they dreamed about the new country where people had enough to eat and to wear, where their children might receive a good education, where they need not be in constant fear of the officers of the government; the land of peace and plenty!

How they had scrimped and saved to come to America! There were men in the crowd that waited to leave the steamer. Safely tucked in their pockets were the few dollars that were to start them out on their way to great fortune. As they stood there ready to cross the little bridge into the new world, some of them were thinking of sweethearts they had left behind for whom they must work and save that some day they, too, might come to this new land. There were husbands and fathers who had ventured alone to prepare a home for their wives

and children still in the old country. There were children in their funny little peasant clothes, eager to get off and be busy investigating the wonders of the new home. But most fascinating to us were the mothers, worn and haggard after the long journey, with crying babies in their arms and tired children clinging to their skirts.

Eagerly we scanned the faces to discover Slavic types. There was a group of Russian women, not far from them some Poles, very near the railing some that we thought must be Southern Slavs. The bright colored silk scarves and shawls, their peasant boots and short shirts showed signs of long and wearisome travel. Their journey was nearly over, but no expression of joy nor expectation shone on their faces. They were stolid, sad faces of women who had grown old while their years were still young. They showed signs of hard toil, of suffering and oppression. Would their drooping mouths ever smile, their tired eyes ever light up with joy?

As we watched these women, we recalled another picture, the "Landing of the Pilgrims." How much like those brave Pilgrim mothers were these immigrant women today! In spite of our modern civilization, it still takes courage and bravery to make America one's home. Did they know, we wondered, how long in this new land was the path to peace and plenty and how filled with thorns and rocky places? Did they know that they would be huddled together in crowded houses in dirty neigh-

borhoods, would be laughed at because of their queer clothes and their odd names? Did they realize how long and hard they and their husbands would have to work shut away from the blue sky and sunshine? Did they understand how soon those children who were clinging so closely to them now in faith would learn the language and adopt the new customs and lose respect for their old-world mothers? Did they know that they were the human fuel that kept the black smoke rolling out of our great factory chimneys? We knew the sorrows they were to face but longed to tell them of the joys, too, that waited for them in this, our native land. Public schools, libraries, parks, sympathetic nurses and doctors; but best of all, women waiting to be their friends and churches with open doors ready to tell them of the living Christ who brought the message of abundant life. Oh, where were the Stars and Stripes, the bands that with their warm color and martial music might welcome these weary mothers and bring smiles to their toil-worn faces?

Before stepping upon the gang-plank, one woman turned her gaze backwards as if to look for the last time upon the place from which she came. Her arms were empty. Perhaps she had left a little body buried in the homeland. And the others? Were they sad because their hearts and thoughts, too, were back among the folks at home? There were, no doubt, old mothers whom they might not see again, children whom they could not take with

them on this first trip and neighbors and dear friends whose farewells they could not forget. Soon we found our eyes leaving their faces and gazing out across the great ocean, over into the unknown lands from which these women came. How much we could tell them about their new home and how little did we know about their old home! What had they left behind them? What kind of houses did they live in? Did they come from the city or from the country? What were their duties, their pleasures? How different from their old life would their new life be? They were stepping out of an old civilization into a new. What were they bringing with them?

The first and second class passengers had left the steamer and now hundreds of peasants were filing up the gang-plank to finish their entrance requirements into the United States. As they passed, the words kept repeating themselves like a refrain, "Whence came they? Whence came they?"

II

THE RUSSIAN IMMIGRANT WOMAN

The Soul of a Russian Woman

PUSHKIN, in his chief novel in verse, Evgheniy Onyeghin, beautifully characterizes the real woman of Russia. As a simple country girl, Tatiana falls in love with Onyeghin, a typical society man of his day. But Onyeghin pays no attention to the naive love of this country maiden. Circumstances separate the two. Tatiana's mother insists upon her daughter going to Moscow, where she marries an old general. Such a marriage quite naturally brings her to St. Petersburg, where she again meets Onyeghin who hardly recognizes Tatiana in her new life. He falls madly in love with her and writes repeatedly to her but she does not answer him. At last, one day, he finds her reading his letters, her eyes full of tears, and makes her a passionate declaration of his love. To this Tatiana replies in a monologue over which a generation of Russian women have cried:

"Onyeghin, I was younger then and better looking, I suppose, and I loved you...." But the love of a country girl offered nothing new to Onyeghin. He paid no attention to her...."Why then does he follow now at every step? Why such display of his

attentions? Is it because she is now rich and belongs to the high society, and is well received at Court?

"Because my fall, in such condition,
Would be well noted everywhere,
And bring you an envied reputation?"

And she continues:

"For me, Onyeghin, all this wealth,
This showy tinsel of Court life,
All my successes in the world,
For me are naught! I gladly would
Give up these rags, this masquerade,
And all the brilliancy and din,
For a small shelf of books, a garden wild,
Our weather-beaten house so poor,
Those very places where I met
With you, Onyeghin, that first time:
And from the churchyard of our village,
Where now a cross and shady trees
Stand on the grave of my poor nurse.

.....
And happiness was possible then!
It was so near!

She supplicates Onyeghin to leave her. "I love you," she says:

"Why should I hide from you the truth?
But I am given to another,
And true to him I shall remain."¹

How many thousands of young Russian women

1. Ideals and Realities in Russian Literature Kropatkin.

have later repeated these same verses and said to themselves, "I would gladly give up all these rags and all this masquerade of luxurious life for a small shelf of books; for life in the country amidst the peasants and for the grave of my old nurse in our village." How many have done it! Although the average immigrant Russian woman is uneducated to the degree that she can neither read nor write in her own language, yet, surely, she has latent within her the possibilities of a Tatiana.

Who Are The Russians?

Among the Russians we find traces of many races, but two in particular, the Finn and the Tartar. Russia has by no means been absorbed by the Finn but on the contrary has been able to assimilate the Finn and keep the Slavic element predominant. Between the thirteenth and sixteenth centuries Russia was invaded by the Tartars. M. Leroy Beaulieu concludes that "the Tartar influence on Russia was great, but historically and politically only, and not racially. The Tartar element whatever its historic influence may have been remained alien and foreign to the rest of the nation. It was neither assimilated, as happened in the case of the Finnish element, nor did it assimilate. Therefore, we see that the Russians are Slavs.

One of the places where the Tartar influence manifested itself was in the condition of women. The "terem" with its "twenty-seven locks" was the

vogue, and "thereby hangs the tale." The story is much like those you read of Turkish women today. Women of the upper classes were confined to the "terem" where no man, save the husband, was allowed to come. The girl's parents arranged for her marriage and her face was hidden from her husband until after the wedding ceremony. Education for her was unknown, the Russian woman lived a "veiled" existence.

The Liberation Of The Russian Woman

To Peter the Great, the Russian woman owes much. He went abroad, incognito, and studied the life of Western Europe. Upon his return, he instituted many drastic reforms. Up until this time, Russian men were wearing the many-colored, loose robes of the East, and the long, flowing beards. Peter insisted upon the use of Western clothes and the shaving of beards. The latter custom is supposed to have been inaugurated in a very characteristic way at the first ball held by Peter upon his return. It is said that he stood at the head of the receiving line with a huge pair of scissors in his hand. As the guests filed by, Peter applied the scissors and the guests parted with their beards. Then, Peter ordered the women who had been confined to the "terem," wives of nobles and merchants, to be released and insisted upon them being dressed in Western clothes. Marriage was no longer compulsory and the betrothed were per-

mitted to see each other before the wedding day. These, of course, were but a few of Peter's many reforms.

In 1762 Catherine II was placed upon the throne. In her, the women had another champion. She, too, was a reformer fully in sympathy with Western culture. The French influence was very strong in Russia at this time, though it did not penetrate beneath the upper classes. Until Catherine's reign, there were few schools for men and none for women. In 1764, Catherine established Smolny Institute, where the girls of the nobility and clergy classes were sent as pupils. It was no more than a finishing school where French, dancing and etiquette were taught; yet it was a great step to take toward the education of women. Between the years of 1782 and 1800, the total enrollment of all the schools in Russia was 176,730, only seven percent of these being girls. In other words, in 1800, only 12,595 girls were in Russian schools.

In 1812, when the ragged, defeated ends of Napoleon's proud army were skulking back to France, many of the soldiers were captured by Russian families. Most of these captives were well trained and educated men and were employed by the Russians as tutors to their daughters. Thus, to more girls was offered the opportunity for education though they learned to read and write the French better than their own language.

In the year 1800 the first high schools or gym-

nasia were opened for girls. These schools offered a course of eight years, the upper grades corresponding to the American high school and two years of college. The subjects taught were languages and literature, each girl being required to master two languages.

The year 1861 is a very important date in the history of Russia. Though it marks no distinct advance in the education of women, it is the year when millions of serfs with their wives and children were freed. Though negotiations for the freedom of serfs had gone on since the reign of Catherine II it remained to be completed during the reign of Alexander II. This was when education should have become general in Russia; but just as the United States made no provision for the education of the Negro when he was freed, so education was denied the freed serf. It is from this class that the vast majority of our immigrants come.

Shortly after the opening of the high schools for women, the doors of the Russian universities were thrown wide to them. The University of Petersburg took the first steps in 1867, admitting women to some of her classes. Then, in 1881, the doors of all higher institutions of learning were opened and women were admitted to all courses.

As the path of education opened and slowly widened for the woman of Russia, the physical effect it produced upon her was interesting. So eager was she for learning that when higher education was granted to her, she clipped her hair, forgot her

feminine attributes, and became as a man among men. It was her business to prove to the other sex that women had brains and could use them as intelligently as the men, and she let nothing stand in her way. For a while she lost her feminine charm; yet never did she lose the respect of her fellow students. The men knew what was going on in the heart of the woman student and admired her for her strength of purpose and character. To her, education was a holy thing. Gradually, the pendulum swung back, and today the woman student in Russia is a charming, feminine comrade to her brother students. Charming and feminine, yet she still considers knowledge a sacred thing to be reverently pursued. Like Tatiana, she would gladly give up everything for a shelf of books.

The change in the government of Russia in 1917 caused two innovations in Russian life that should be mentioned here. At that time only two million of the one hundred and fifty million people had been touched by the school system. Since then, public schools have been opened all over Russia and elementary education has become compulsory. It will take years to supply these schools with well equipped teachers. But there are many intellectuals, who, for the present exiled, will return to their native land, taking with them ideas of school systems and education gleaned from the most highly educated countries of the world. In 1917, the First Congress of Russia gave all rights of citizenship to women as well as men. This shows the

position of esteem in which the Russian holds woman. She received her citizenship and came into power, not by suffrage but by virtue of the respect in which Russia holds her women.

Pushkin, in the early part of the nineteenth century, gives us one picture of Tatiana. Today, Cody Marsh gives a modern picture of Tatiana, a girl of Siberia. During a plague of typhus and cholera, Cody Marsh, ex-captain of the American Red Cross with the American Expeditionary Forces in Siberia, visited a hospital where there were thousands of cases of typhus. "One ward," he tells us, "in which two hundred persons were ill had one nurse in attendance. When the commandant took me through, we found this little nurse in a heap on the floor crying. I asked her why she was crying, thinking she, too, was stricken. She replied that she was quite well, though tired, but her heart was aching for those two hundred sick men because she could not get around to all of them to take their nourishment or medicines, and they were too sick to help themselves. Then, as she broke into an agonizing sob, she cried, 'Oh, why didn't the good God give me twenty bodies for this heart that would do so much!'"¹ In the two pictures of Tatiana we see the soul of the liberated Russian woman.

Peasant Characteristics

The Russian peasant forms three-fourths of the

1. "Glimpses of Siberia"—National Geographic—Dec. 1920.

population of Russia. Eighty percent of them are farmers. There is a great gulf between the small educated class of Russia and the peasant. As we have remarked before, the vast majority of the immigrants are from the peasant or old serf class. We have made a hasty survey of the liberation of the Russian woman marking especially the possibilities latent in her soul. Now, let us turn to the condition of life under which the peasant woman actually lives. One glance at her life will demonstrate to us the great adjustment she must make on entering American life.

Russian nature is democratic and peaceful, but in the cause of freedom no sacrifice is too great. He has a burning passion for education and when he has obtained it, he considers it a holy mission to instruct others. But above all these, the Russian is kindly and humane. How perverted is the picture made popular by the cartoonist of the rough shaggy-bearded Russian who is made up only of brutal strength! Underneath that rough exterior is a heart filled with tenderness and sympathy, that reacts most readily to the gentle, the artistic and the beautiful. The Russian peasant is very emotional which accounts for his artistic temperament. His love of the beautiful creeps out in many ways. The cornices of his home, the window frames, the doors; all have a touch of beauty. Most charming embroidery, cross-stitch designs, and lace are made by the women. The home of a wealthy peasant is delightful and attractive. But the emo-

tional, artistic nature is expressed most thoroughly in the folk-lore, the folk-songs and the dances of the people. There, in a land where millions could neither read nor write, grew up an endless amount of charming fairy tales and folk-songs, the creation of artistic souls, which have been passed from generation to generation by the grandmothers and grandfathers. The Russian peasant is constantly bursting into song. He sings at his work and at his play, and in his songs, he expresses his feelings of joy; his love, his suffering. Songs are a part of his soul.

The Russian people, en masse, are light-haired, blue-eyed, fair-skinned people. They are a race of tremendous strength and endurance. In the poorer regions where food is scarce the people are of inferior strength. Under normal conditions, the Russian peasant grows powerful and hardy and almost free from disease. Because of the lack of machinery, the peasant works with his body and develops muscles of steel.

Religion in Russia is a matter of vital interest and great importance when studying the people. They are inherently religious. In the past the Russians have considered devotion to the Russian Orthodox Church as the very corner-stone of patriotism. Religion meant more than a creed; to renounce the church in the eyes of the majority of Russians was an outrage upon and an insult to the nation itself. There were many religious holidays and festivals and the peasant kept them all. With

the coming of the revolution, the church that had been in league with the government for a time was overthrown. Today, the Russian Church is being tried in the furnace of reformation. The outcome of this religious revival cannot be told. But the peasant loves his church and is by nature a seeker after the truth, and with these two virtues there is nothing to fear for he will surely burn the dross and preserve the good.

The Peasant Home and Community

The peasant's home or "izba" is made of stone or unhewn logs. Nevin O. Winter gives the following detailed description of an "izba": "In the timber regions, this simple cottage is usually built of un-hewn logs, with two or three windows in a row facing the village street and having a pointed roof made of planks or straw.

A generation ago, a chimney was almost a novelty, as the peasant thought it would let in a lot of cold air which he would have to heat, but now most of the "izbas" are furnished with this smoke vent. Where forests are scarce, in the southern part of Great Russia, a straw roof is substituted. Often-times there is an arched entrance from the street to the yard. The interior of the 'izba' usually consists of only one room, perhaps fifteen feet square. There may be a small loft overhead where some of the family sleep. This gives extra space, and there will be a storeroom somewhere

which is not heated. Bunks are built around the room which take the place of beds, and in cold weather, the top of the stove is the most comfortable place to be found.

Underneath the 'izba' there is generally a sort of shallow cellar, where vegetables, milk and other supplies are kept. The walls and stove are kept freshly whitewashed. However dirty the house may be, there is often a neat lace curtain at each window and a row of flower pots on the sill. The Russian housewife seems to feel the need of a little color in the midst of her dreary surroundings. One can imagine what the atmosphere becomes with the windows hermetically sealed for months. The stable for the horses, cows and other live stock adjoins the house and in winter, they are given a share of the heat."¹

The village in Russia usually consists of long lines of such "izbas" facing each other, with a broad street separating them. Russia is a country of villages and small towns. The life of a small town is really interesting. On the surface it is very calm; yet everybody is striving toward a different life, toward a life much broader, both materially and spiritually. The Russian peasant's fare is extremely simple, the staples being sour cabbage and black bread. But during the harvest festival everything is plentiful; pork, mutton and beef,

1. Nevin O. Winter—"The Russian Empire of Today and Yesterday."

which ordinarily is scarce. After the meals, dancing, singing, and in the old days, the serving of vodka, out on the village green, are in order. The whole village enjoys the festival together.

The Life Of A Peasant Girl

In many respects, the girlhood of a peasant is quite like that of any other girl except that it does not last as long. Her playground is the great out-of-doors as it is also her workshop. Very early, indeed, does she go out with the older members of her family to work in the fields. Yet, in her youngest days, she is not denied the pleasures of dolls and simple little home-made toys. Then, she has her housekeeping duties to learn. Of course, house cleaning is not so intricate in Russian peasants' homes, but when you add to it cooking, spinning, weaving, embroidering, dressmaking, and the farm work, a little girl has much to learn.

All too soon her youth has passed and the peasant girl finds herself on the brink of womanhood and all the responsibilities that come with it. Russian girls marry very young. Usually the parents, with the assistance of a go-between, arrange for the marriage, leaving no choice to the girl. However love affairs do spring up, girls are courted and marriages are based on love. Often, when a peasant having a marriageable son looks about his little patch of ground and realizes that the crops are getting ahead of him in spite of his long hours of

work, he decides it is time for his son to marry and bring another "hand" to the farm. So the parents look about for a strong, able-bodied girl for the wife of their son. Very often a trousseau and dowry are lacking, the latter usually consisting of a piece of furniture, a very little money or a cow.

Marriage in Russia is a real occasion. Not only do they celebrate the wedding day but the betrothal as well. All the families on both sides of the house are invited along with the villagers to partake of the festivities which last for several days or until the provisions run out. Dancing, eating, games, singing and more dancing fill the days with merriment.

To the girl wife, those days of merriment mean the end of youth. She becomes a wife, enters her husband's family and takes her full share of the duties of married life. She is subject to her husband who is head of the house. She works in the field and in the home. Her life consists of spinning, weaving, embroidering, cooking and farming. At times she takes her soiled clothing to the stream with the other villagers to wash them in the clear running water, beating the home-woven linens on the stones before laying them in the sun to bleach. The first baby comes and her duties are multiplied. Year after year, her babies come, for Russian families are large. Under the strain of all this work, the peasant mother soon loses her youth. She is an old woman when her oldest daughter at sixteen or seventeen is ready to marry.



A GROUP OF AMERICANS AND SLAVIC
AMERICANS HIKING. WHO'S WHO?

A SLAV IN NATIVE COSTUME

When the peasant girl becomes the grandmother in the house, she still finds much to keep her busy. While the older members of the family are out in the fields, it is she who does the simple cooking, attends to the garden, the geese, and is nurse for the little children.

Out of this simple life where sewing machines, rocking chairs, gas stoves, electric lights, toilet facilities, and even washboards are almost unknown, the Russian woman comes to America, the land of modern improvements.

The Russian Immigrant Woman In America

Like all foreign groups, the Russian mothers, to a great extent, do not penetrate American life. The family of a Russian woman is large, and unless she is employed away from home, she does not go very far away from her home and neighborhood. We expect her to fit into American life at once and condemn her if she doesn't. When she enters America, besides adjusting herself to the new housekeeping arrangements which are a problem in themselves, she is expected to take her place in social life. This means an understanding of all the laws of sanitation and health, school laws, knowledge of American social customs, and all of this without being able to speak or read the English language. The husbands go to work, adopt many American customs, and soon learn to adjust themselves. The children enter the public school, learn

the English language and very quickly become Americanized. Before long, it is they who are acting as interpreters and guides for their mothers. There grows up a great gulf between the mother and the outside world in which her husband and children live. Very often the mother is employed outside of her home and it would seem as if this would help the situation, but in most cases, the double amount of work at home and outside the home is so wearing on the mother that she has no ambition to learn the English language nor to take on new customs. Therefore, it is our business to find these women and take to them the best America has to offer. Where shall we find them?

Migration and Distribution of the Russians

When a Russian first arrives in America, he is practically poverty stricken. Therefore, it behooves him to get work as soon as possible. Where he shall live is determined generally by one or both of two factors; the demand for hard labor in the factories or mines or the location of other Russian groups. Few of them move very far west but stay along the eastern coast. The largest number of Russians remain in New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Connecticut. However, we find large colonies in the cities of the middle west, such as Chicago, Detroit and Cleveland. A few migrate to farming regions of Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin. When once settled in Amer-

ica, Russians do not move from place to place. They obtain work as soon as possible and remain where their work is.

Labor Conditions Among the Russians in America

In studying the labor conditions of Russians in America, we must remember that due to their lack of advantages in their native land, they are among the most illiterate and unskilled immigrants. Also, we must remember that they come to us very strong in body. Since they need money, they will take work wherever they can find it. Statistics show that the Russian-born laborers are found doing the hardest and dirtiest work, both in the mines and in the factories. We find the greatest numbers of Russians in the mines, iron and steel mills and slaughtering and meat packing industries. Statistics also show that the second generation of Russians in America, to a very great extent, do not stay in these industries.

Besides doing the very hardest work, Russians are working very long hours and in the mines are given the very worst seams to work. It is quite true that the wages they earn are very much higher than anything they have earned before but it is also true that they are earning the smallest wages of all immigrants. The contrast between their out-of-door life in Russia and the long hours of confinement in factories and mines, soon tell on their physical strength. But on the whole, the greater

freedom which they find in America compensates to some degree for the other hardships. Yet, is it fair for America to take advantage of their ignorance of what is an honest wage and a reasonable day of work?

In the nineteenth century, Thomas Hood pricked the industrial conscience of England with his poem, "The Song of the Shirt." Let us quote a few lines here:

"Work! Work! Work!
While the cock is crowing aloof!
And work! work! work!
Till the stars shine through the roof!

.....

Work! Work! Work!
My labor never flags;
And what are the wages? A bed of straw,
A crust of bread and rags.

That shattered roof—this naked floor—
A table, a broken chair—
And a wall so blank—my shadow I thank
For sometimes falling there!

.....

O, God! that bread should be so dear,
And flesh and blood so cheap!"

In comparison with this poem, let me quote from the volume, "The Russian Immigrant" by Jerome

Davis. A Russian worker expressing himself about American life said, "Wor'rk, wor'rk wor'rk, always, every day, every week, ten hours, twelve hours, nights—all a time—no spell and all a time every d—furnace hungry." Perhaps this is not poetical, yet it is expressive and suggestive of the conditions under which the Russians work. Surely with such a weekly program, no one could find time to enjoy his home, find time for recreation, or find the best America offers.

The Russian woman works under the same conditions as her husband. There are very many more Russian men than women in America. This is due to two facts: the majority who immigrate are single men, and the married men come over alone, and later when they can afford to do so, send for their families. A great many women keep boarders. They get up very early in the morning to work not only for their own large families but to cook for from three to eighteen boarders. Some families have it so arranged that the father works during the day and the mother on the night shift. The keeping of boarders has had a great tendency to break up homes and families, and in a great many places, the practice is being abandoned. The women are following their husbands into the factory, restaurant or cleaning offices.

Russian Home Conditions in America

Although, wherever possible, they own their own homes, some of the very worst foreign homes are

those of the Russians. Usually, after stumbling through a dark, unlighted passageway, and climbing one or more flights of dark stairs at the peril of one's life, a visitor comes upon a suite of from one to three rooms; the home of the Russian family. If the home consists of three rooms, there is always one room that receives either no light or very little. The plaster is always in need of repair, the wall paper ugly and unsightly. Laundry facilities are entirely lacking and usually there is a common toilet for the entire tenement. In this home a family of from five to nine will be living and paying twenty or more dollars a month for rent. In most of these places, no self-respecting American family would live, nor would a landlord with an awakened conscience own them.

In the economic and housing conditions just described, very little time or inclination is left for recreation. When asked what the Russian woman's recreation is, a fine Russian man sadly replied, "I fear her work is her recreation." Here and there, the Russians have organized national clubs, rented and equipped buildings for them, and maintained a high type of recreation for their members. Russians like music and dancing and they very often rent a hall and hold dances that are patronized by the entire family. At these dances, a very wholesome evening is enjoyed. If given an opportunity, the average Russian immigrant woman would select and fit herself for a

high type of work, a better home and wholesome recreation.

Our Responsibility to the Russian Immigrant Woman

Jerome Davis, who spent two years and a half in Russia in intimate contact with many soldiers and peasants, found it difficult to find anyone who had been in America who was still friendly to her. Instead of lauding her praises, they cursed her as a nation of money getters and selfish capitalists. These disappointed Russians, no doubt, are acting in many cases as agents of hatred, and are spreading the gospel of enmity toward America.

Not long ago, we asked a young Russian man, who had been in America ten years, what he considered the soul of America. After asking the question, we sat back comfortably, expecting to listen to a beautiful discourse on the wonderful spirit of our country. But the man answered in one word, "Materialism." When we objected, he cited case after case which we had to admit showed absolute signs of materialism. Being Americans, we protested that he had not found the soul of our country. A little later, we asked another Russian the same question and he said, "I found the soul of America in the Protestant Church. After my money was gone, I wandered around, very lonely and hungry for a time. I had to go to work doing harder and dirtier jobs than I had ever done before. I was ready to hate Amer-

ica when one night in a young peoples' meeting of a church, a new joy came into my life. I found that the soul of America was not just cold materialism but was a warm spirit of friendship."

Are not these two statements significant? Ought not the best things of American life to be expressed in the Protestant Church? Therefore, ought we not to seek out the Russian immigrant woman and lead her to the best in American life?

III

FROM THE OLD WORLD TO THE NEW

The Necessity for Reaching the Immigrant Mother

“**M**E NO KNOW,” accompanied by a shrug of her shoulders is the characteristic answer an American receives from a foreign woman. Then she adds, “Me call Mary.” Little ten year old Mary comes and smilingly explains, “My mudder she don’t know anyting. What you want?” Mary has been to school and has learned the English language and some American customs; she is her mother’s mouthpiece and very often must offer her mother advice. In making the transition from the old world to the new it is the mother who makes the greatest sacrifice. In most cases she is lost entirely to American life and remains a lonely stranger in a foreign land. Her husband goes out to work each day, gets over his timidity and soon is able to find his way around the city or village; he learns enough English to help himself; soon he does all the errands for his wife; he takes the children to town to buy clothes and to the market to get the weekly supply of food. Gradually, both the father and the children take the attitude that the mother knows nothing and is incapable of

learning. They begin to manage their own affairs and the poor mother is left to see her family grow away from her. As the children grow older the breach grows wider and when her daughters are sixteen years old they are total strangers to her. The daughters are products of a new civilization which the mothers have not been able to penetrate.

We know that American life can be no better than her home life. The old adage, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world," applies to America as well as elsewhere. Unless we can help each mother to get the highest ideals possible we cannot expect the home life to be of the highest order. Can we permit thousands of foreign mothers to hold their old country ideals unchanged and expect their homes to be truly American? Often real home life is impossible in immigrant families because of the great breach between husband and wife and mother and children. We must bring the mother out of her home and into touch with things that will help her to keep abreast of her husband and children, to find something in American life to love and respect, and finally, to create in her the desire to become a citizen of the country of her adoption. When we can do that we shall save families from disruption, for the mother determines the home; we shall save America, for the home determines America.

The Problems of the Immigrant Mother

1. Where will she live?

The first real problem confronting the immigrant woman upon her arrival in America is the location of her home. Her future home really is reserved for her as it is determined by the place where her friends or relatives live, by the kind of work her husband decides to do, and the amount of money he expects to earn. Many immigrants leave the wharf and go directly to the places in which they are to live and from which they never wander. Others go from place to place for several months before they find work and a home. Very often the husband has preceded the wife to America and has established a meager home to which he takes his family.

There are three types of communities in which we find the Slavic immigrant, the urban, cosmopolitan, and the predominating American. The urban community is one built up of practically one race. A few Slavs find themselves located in a neighborhood. They attract others of their nationality and their friends and relatives soon join them. The Americans move out and we have a "Little Poland" or a "Little Russia," as the case may be. We find such communities in many large American cities and in smaller mining and manufacturing towns and farming regions. In the urban community we find an almost homogeneity of race, of interests, and of motives. Here we find the national clubs, the national Church, and the stores managed by Slavs or Slavic speaking Jews. Not so common as the urban community is the cosmo-

politan type. Usually this type is found in a neighborhood of varying degrees better than the urban community. When the young people brought up in American schools marry, they move out of the old neighborhood into a better one. These new communities are made up of a number of different races. But since the tendency is for racial colonization the families in these groups do not mix. They still go back to the old club houses and to visit with the friends and relatives in the old community. The predominantly American type we find usually in small cities where there are just a few Slavs attracted by some particular work. They associate only with themselves, though the children do make American friendships. Very often we find the third generation of Slavs or those who have prospered very well living alone among Americans.

There are several causes for this Slavic segregation. The economic reason is the greatest. They come to America with practically no money and must find the cheapest rent possible. They cannot speak the English language and must find people of their own nationality to interpret for them. As a very large percent of the foreigners are men who are single or without their wives, Slavic women must keep boarders. This helps to lighten their household expenses and assists the men in saving money to send for their families. The last reason for Slavic segregation has two aspects, that of the Slav and of the American. The Slav seldom seeks rent for his first home among Americans be-

cause he is skeptical of them. He does not understand the customs of the country and the transition from the old home to a real American neighborhood would be too great for him to bear. By first living among his own people he can learn the customs gradually and finally emerge a seasoned American to live among Americans. Not all Americans would treat the Slav in a friendly manner should he move into their neighborhood. Generally, if a Pole or a Russian manages to rent or buy a home in an American neighborhood, "For Sale" signs begin to appear on all the other houses. Very soon, instead of an American community a Slavic community has developed.

The Slavs' first homes are always in very poor sections of the city. Many times a large house built in former days for a single family is rented to five or six foreign families. The plumbing facilities remain in the old condition and are not adequate for more than one family. The large rooms are divided up and partitioned without thought to proper ventilation. Hallways are boarded up making the stairways dark, dangerous, and ill-ventilated and lighted only by smoking gas jets. Such a home may have a small yard hardly adequate for drying clothes for the occupants and allowing insufficient room for the children to play. Or the home may be a tenement house with from five to twenty-five or more families. Here each family has its own small group of rooms using in common the toilet and water supplies in the hallways. These houses

have no yards; the laundry is dried on the meager back porches and fire escapes; the children are forced to play in the crowded streets. In some cases homes for the foreigners are built by the industries hiring them. These are usually nothing more than rows upon rows of shacks or tiny houses all built alike, merely providing covering from the snow and rain.

Slavic homes and Slavic communities vary in their cleanliness with the part of Europe from which the people come, the length of residence in America, the natural habits of the family, and the kind of councilman representing them at the municipal headquarters. The first home consists of from one to three rooms. In Europe they have been in the habit of living in very small quarters but most of their time was spent in the open air. The few windows in their tiny homes in Europe were seldom opened and never at night. They carry over that habit into American life and soon they lose the bloom from their cheeks. Living night and day in poor air soon has its effect upon the health of the Slav. Many of the household necessities such as wash tubs, gas stoves, sewing machines, modern cooking utensils, and so forth are new to the Slavic woman. Just how to care for them and keep them clean is a problem she must learn to solve. With several children, one or more boarders, and only two or three rooms, the Slavic woman finds it almost impossible to keep her house tidy. But in all of the Slavic groups we find neat,

attractive homes. With dozens of children playing in the same yards and on the streets, it is practically impossible to keep the yards and streets clean. But if the councilman is interested in his community, he can do much to have the garbage disposal well cared for, the streets cleaned regularly, and the buildings as far as possible kept in good repair.

In spite of the congestion, the Slavs often convert their homes into veritable garden spots. Where opportunity permits they have splendid vegetable gardens, beautiful flower beds, and their porches are covered with vines. As they prosper and are able to buy their own homes, they take great pride in making them beautiful. Here and there in a Slavic neighborhood these well kept homes stand out as beacon lights to all the community, beckoning others on to better homes. Always by the second generation the Slavic home has improved. Neat white curtains edged in handmade lace appear at the windows. A living room is acquired by this time in which beautiful pieces of handmade embroidery are displayed. The kitchen floor instead of being bare is covered with spotless linoleum. Musical instruments which are not lacking in the first home are multiplied in number, a piano is added or a victrola. Book cases appear filled with school books and others both in English and in the Slavic languages. Pieces of nicely made furniture that the sons have made in school are proudly displayed. A second generation Slavic home is quite American, and in the case of the third generation,

it is very hard to tell the difference. But in all the shifting and changing the immigrant mother usually remains the same.

The Czechs were the earliest of the Slavs to come to America in great numbers. There are about seven hundred and fifty thousand of them scattered from New York City out beyond the Mississippi River. The largest number is found in Chicago, there being about one hundred and eighty thousand in that city. There are fifty thousand in New York City, seventy-five thousand in Cleveland, and fifty thousand in each of the following states: Wisconsin, Nebraska, Texas, Minnesota, and Iowa.

The Poles in America number approximately three million and a half. Most of the Poles are found along the New England coast, and in the large mid-western cities, though many of them are in the mining regions of Pennsylvania.

There are five hundred thousand Slovaks in America found in our coal mining and steel mill districts of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois. There are an equal number of Jugoslavs located from western Pennsylvania to Illinois and in Michigan and Minnesota. Fifty thousand would number the Bulgarians in our country who live principally in Illinois, though in any large Slavic group some Bulgars may be found.

Due to the sudden rise of Russian immigration since the war, it is hard to estimate the number in America, though it is placed near a million. The earliest Russians came and followed the other

Slavic groups into the mines and meat packing and steel industries. The newer Russians seldom go very far from the Eastern coast and are to be found in New York City, Boston, Cambridge, and many of the manufacturing towns of New England.

2. The Boarder Problem.

In addition to the problem of the home, the boarder problem presents itself. This is an entirely new feature for the immigrant, she never has kept boarders before. With rent high and salaries low, the mother sees a means of helping to swell the family income by caring for the homeless men of her own nationality. But the effects of this system are very grave. The lodgers are given the best sleeping room while the rest of the family sleeps upon the floor, the mother getting the most undesirable spot. Sometimes the boarders work shifts and two or three sets take turns sleeping in the same beds. This overcrowding increases the evils of washing facilities and results in unclean bodies, unclean homes, and the spreading of disease. Often the mother must rise long before the rest of the family in order to pack all the dinner pails before getting breakfast. She is kept busy all day cooking for her family and lodgers, washing their clothes and trying to keep her house tidy. Her life becomes a humdrum existence and she a real slave. The very worst feature of the boarder problem is the fact that much immorality results

from it and many homes are broken as a result of it.

3. Food Problem.

The problem of diet is not only an immigrant problem, physicians are wrestling constantly with this problem among all people. Unconsciously, the immigrant woman had been in the habit of giving her family a balanced diet. Although money was scarce in the farm districts of the Slavic countries, wholesome food could always be obtained. Everyone raised his own vegetables, grain, cattle, and fowls. But in America the question immediately is, what will the mother cook for her family and where will she get it? The neighborhood stores carry only a limited supply of meat and vegetables and that at an exorbitant price. Where salaries are small many things must be cut out of the diet. The Slavic family soon finds itself living on soup, black bread, coffee, and cheap American pastry. Physicians claim that the largest percent of patients among Slavic people are suffering from diseases caused by poor nourishment. When the Slavic woman has learned how and where to buy and has the money to purchase good ingredients, she can cook very well and makes a number of very tasty dishes.

4. The Health Problem.

The food problem leads us naturally into the problem of health. Here the Slavic woman is up against a vital problem. In her homeland health and the care of disease was a personal matter, the

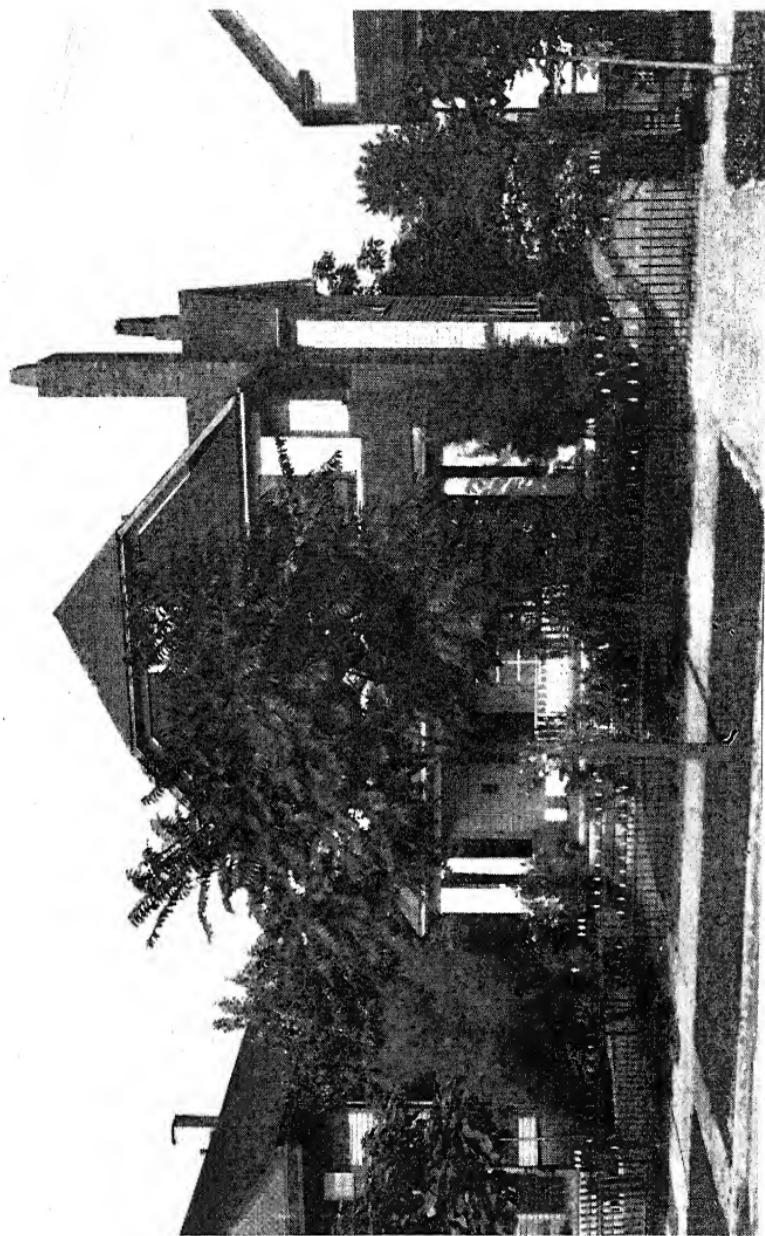
government paid little attention to the physical condition of its people and doctors were scarce. In the old country among the peasants superstitions abounded and when herbs failed to bring relief the "witch woman" or wise woman who had power to kill or cure was called upon. Care was taken not to have the "witch woman" look at a little child if he were well lest she might cast an evil spell upon him. The word hospital to a Slavic peasant really spelled death. In the old country no one ever was taken to the hospital unless as a very last resort, and the peasant watching the departing patient realized that he would be brought home to bury. Such superstitions and customs, centuries old, do not disappear with the arrival in America, but persist even after the old superstitious immigrant grandmother is dead.

In coming to America, the transition from the agricultural life to industrial life, from free outdoor life to indoor occupations and crowded neighborhoods, and the change of food and climate result in serious physical conditions. The death rate is higher among the foreign men than women since they are placed in more hazardous positions. But the deaths resulting from diseases are by far the greatest. The death rate of babies less than a month old is higher among babies of native mothers, showing that the foreign mothers are better able to give birth to children. But between the ages of one month and one year the death rate of babies of the foreign born far exceeds that of na-

tive born babies. This shows that the native mother has learned how to care for her children and to make use of the health facilities provided in America. But the immigrant mother does not know how to care for her baby's health in these new surroundings nor how to make use of the things available for that purpose. Among the Slavs diseases of the digestive system, kidneys, circulatory system, and those resulting from alcoholism are most prevalent.

If in America the "wise woman" is of no avail, the next place the foreigner turns is to the drug store. In Europe the druggist is a learned man who does not deal in patent medicines but in herbs. He can advise the patients concerning their illnesses. The Slavs' respect for the druggist carries over into American life but he finds the American druggist different. Although he may be skilled in chemistry he cannot prescribe and the foreigner must go elsewhere to know what to do for his ill health.

As a last resort the foreigner turns to the private physician. What kind does he choose? Not one with a small, neat sign such as American good taste prescribes, but one who advertises! In Europe it is common for a good doctor to advertise. Knowing this, a great many unscrupulous, poor doctors and medical quacks are using advertising as a means to further their gainful ends. They make their wares known by large advertisements in the foreign language newspapers. These



A POLISH HOME, CLEVELAND, OHIO

quacks often have an office in which they keep, through bribery, a poor specimen of a licensed doctor. They appeal in the papers to the emotion of fear urging the necessity in America to be alarmed at every little cough, suggesting that blood diseases dig the graves of millions, and so forth. Knowing the economic pressure under which the foreigners live, they lure them on by inviting them for free consultation and examination. False testimonials are advertised telling how people escaped long illnesses, operations, pain, death, and the dangers of childbirth by following the suggestions of the advertisers. The evils of medical quackery cannot be too highly stressed. It is almost by chance that a foreigner secures the help of a good physician.

The maternity case presents a very grave problem among the Slavs. In Europe they have been accustomed to calling upon a midwife at the time of childbirth. But the European widwife is far different from those who practice in America. Special courses of from six months to two years are offered by the governments of Europe for the training of women in obstetrics. Very often the oldest daughter of the "land owner" receives this training and is able to care for all the maternity cases in her village. In many places the women very often have to depend upon each other during confinement. In America the midwife is of an inferior standing. Usually she has had no training whatsoever, except the rearing of her own large

family. Thirteen states of the Union have no laws regarding midwifery; twenty-one states have laws regarding the practice; in thirteen states the mid-wife must pass examinations; and in twelve states the midwife is legally recognized but there are no general laws to regulate her practice.

There is no other event in life so interwoven with tradition as the birth of a child. To understand the view-point of a Slavic woman one must understand her entire background. These old traditions do not drop away when leaving the country but persist just as strongly in America. In Europe little attention is paid to the length of time the mother spends in bed after the birth of her child. The women are so used to hard work that childbirth is comparatively easy for them. The Slavic woman is not so independent as the native woman. The authority lies with her husband. She shrinks from employing a male doctor and her husband is loath to permit it. It is very hard to convince the husband of the proper care needed at such a time. If a midwife cannot be secured, the economic problem becomes a real factor. The midwife is willing to take her fee which is small in several payments. In addition to the confinement, she will make daily visits to the patient in the capacity of nurse and housekeeper. If a doctor must be secured his fee is higher than the foreigner cares to pay, he cannot as a rule speak the language of the Slav, and he must be assisted by a nurse. The length of time the mother spends in bed varies with the

amount of work she has to do. It is no common thing upon calling at the home the day after a new baby is born to be met at the door by the mother. With the crowded, unsanitary living conditions, lack of money and knowledge of the language, the boarder problem, and the background of superstitions and traditions totally foreign, childbirth becomes a serious problem for a foreign woman in America.

Slavs are absolutely opposed to hospitals and dispensaries because they are ignorant of them. Shall we make laws and demand arbitrarily that the immigrant live up to them and punish him severely for disobeying? Shall we firmly assert that it is un-American for the Slav to continue his old customs in America and try to force him to forget them? Shall we lay down laws in the English language and expect Slavic people to read them and understand them? Must we not do more than that? Must we not establish systems of education among the foreigners to make sanitation possible, to remove superstition, to teach the mothers how to cook proper foods, to care for simple illnesses, and the proper use of dispensaries and clinics?

5. The Industrial Problem.

The Slavic woman in America is looked upon as a source of income. She has all the handicaps of the American woman in industry plus the lack of knowledge. The immigrant woman is doing the hardest and dirtiest of manual labor and receiving in exchange the very lowest wage. But even the

lowest wage seems high to her since she has never earned money before. Although she comes from the farm she can fit into factory work very well. Because of the specialization of simple tasks, she can learn to do one thing well. It is estimated that ninety percent of Slavic women are working or are willing to work when the opportunity presents itself.

The majority of Slavic women are found doing factory work, farm labor, restaurant work, or keeping boarders. Only a small percentage of them are in domestic service for three reasons: first, they do not like to live away from home; second, they come to America looking for greater opportunities than housework affords; third, their manner of living is so different that they are lost in an American household. In large sections of the mid-west and south-west, Russians, Bohemians, and South Slavs are found "following the crops." These migrant workers from March to late in the fall follow one crop after another. The entire family goes under contract, lives in one miserable shack here and another there, under the most unsanitary conditions. It is estimated that 1,500,000 children (not all foreign) are engaged in this kind of agriculture. These children grow stunted in body and mind with no idea of the finer side of American life. Along the east coast in New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, thousands of women and children are hired in the canning factories. In the woolen and cotton mills and clothing factories in

the east and in the large middle-western cities many Slavic women are employed. Where the mother does not leave the home, boarders are resorted to as a means of income. With the mother trying to do a double duty of homemaking and bread winning, it stands to reason that she can do neither well.

6. Social Life.

In the old country the social life of the Slavic woman was one with her neighbors. The entire village entered into the great festival days, the weddings, and christenings. Such social life still carries over in America, but due to the crowded conditions under which the Slavs live, these events are not picturesque nor spontaneous. The long hours of work which both the husband and wife are subject to make it impossible for them to enjoy much social life. There are many national organizations among the Slavs which care for their social life but not all of the women are reached by them. The great majority of the women still depend upon the weddings and christenings for their recreation. The moving picture show draws a great many women. There are very few organizations in America built for the purpose of drawing the Slavic woman into the social life and society of American women. Occasionally a church or a Woman's City Club will have a program that includes this feature, but as a rule the immigrant woman is left to find her own recreation or to get along without it.

7. The Problem of Home Life.

The greatest problem of the Slav in the transition from the old to the new country is that of family life. The old patriarchal system exists in the Slavic countries. The word of the parents and most especially of the father is law. The children respect the position of their father. The home is a gathering place for the entire family and their friends. Often this family circle is broken for the first time by the father coming to America. When he is able to send for his wife and children, a spiritual separation has already begun between him and his wife and the children must learn to know their father all over again. According to the common law of the world, the husband exerts his right to choose the home, to discipline his wife and children, to claim their services, to appropriate their earnings, in short, to manage all the affairs of his wife and children. But though the common law is the same in America as in Europe, the Slav soon finds that the position of woman and children is different. Try as he will, the Slavic father cannot maintain the same authority in America as in Europe.

In this new, complex life the mother finds a great many previously unknown responsibilities falling to her lot, most of which she is incapable of assuming. The Slavic immigrant woman knows nothing about modern child training. She is incapable of following her children's school work and their daily interests. She cannot keep in-

formed about their play, their companions; nor can she advise them about their clothes. In the old homeland her children were trained to blind obedience, to be good soldiers not good citizens. The child had to obey. Should he revolt the entire neighborhood was against him. But in America the conditions are entirely different.

Here the child begins to reverse conditions. He learns the language earlier than his mother who must depend on him to explain the visit of the truancy officer, the charity visitor, the sewer inspector, the insurance man, and anyone else who may come to the door. Soon the child is dominating the family. In Europe a child's play was not a mother's problem. At an early age the child was put to work tending the geese or helping in the fields. He either got his play out of his work or entered into the village dances at festival times when the whole family was together. But in America the problem of recreation is a vital one and one which the foreign mother cannot solve. Backyards are scarce and the only place for children to play is out in the city streets or in the very inadequate city playgrounds. The matter of education is a new one. Here education is compulsory and the mother must choose a parochial and a civic school. The idea that education is compulsory, that the children must be at school and on time is a hard one for the immigrant mother to assimilate. Nor can the mother follow intelligently the monthly report card system. When it comes to the

matter of secondary education only a small percentage of the mothers know how to advise, most of them see absolutely no reason for high school education and scores of boys and girls find it very difficult to obtain their mother's permission for advanced schooling. From just an insignificant member of a large family group, the mother finds her child in America has become an individual with certain definite rights and privileges.

Often the father insists upon using old European methods in his family life. But when the children become young men and women they revolt against the old customs and insist upon being American. They refuse to turn in all of their wages but are willing only to pay their board, demanding the rest for clothes and spending money. With small, crowded homes permitting no room to entertain their friends, the young people prefer to walk the streets or go night after night to the "movies" and parks. They will invent most any kind of an excuse to get away from home. They refuse to go to the dances and club meetings of the national organizations of their parents. This revolt of the children often results in broken homes.

With no idea of family life it is surprising what kind of homes many of the children of immigrants establish. Most of them have not been very far from home, but they have gone to school; have read books and have seen moving pictures and plays. From these experiences mixed with the natural desire in every heart for an ideal home,

they construct a home-life far in advance of their parents. But usually, the most pitiful thing about the home of the second generation is the great emphasis laid upon the material progress and the lack of a spiritual life.

8. Religious Life In America.

On arriving in America, as well as everything else, the religious beliefs of the Slavic woman must undergo readjustment. She finds that the Church and State are definitely separated, she is expected to adhere rigidly to the laws of the country but she can do as she pleases religiously. In Europe her religion was so closely bound to her national life that she could not separate the two. If she should object to the national church she knew she would be subject to persecution. But here in America no one interferes with her religious beliefs. She may have come to America to free herself economically, politically, and socially, but no one honestly can free themselves in these three ways without doing some thinking along spiritual lines. Often it takes a whole generation before a Slavic family thinks their way through to spiritual freedom, but sooner or later that time comes.

Statistics cannot be secured regarding the number of Slavs that have broken away from their churches. A survey taken for that purpose cannot be relied upon unless the surveyor is very familiar with the neighborhood and knows the people as friends. Slavs are skeptical about any questions regarding the Church. Rather than have the trou-

ble that might result from openly renouncing the Church, they will claim allegiance to it even if they have lost all faith in it. For an estimate of the religious life of the Slavs in America we must depend upon the statements of the people who know the conditions intimately.

From the time of Hus great religious differences have existed among the Slavs. In the exile following the Thirty Years' War, many of the Czechs gave up the Church entirely and refused to hold any religious belief. These Free Thinkers are very well represented in America. Protestant church workers and social workers among the Czechs are quite unanimous in saying that a third of them are Free Thinkers; another third are only nominal Catholics; and the remainder staunch adherents to the Church. The first two-thirds look for their spiritual refreshment to the Bohemian National Clubs. They are indifferent to the Protestant Church but allow their children to take an active part in all of its activities. The Disciple, Presbyterian, Baptist, Congregational, and Methodist churches have been successful in giving spiritual help to many Czechs.

The Poles as a rule are loyal to the Catholic Church, but at present it is estimated that one-third have dropped away from the Church. Some of the Poles establish free Polish Churches, others adopt Russellism, but many become atheists. The Protestant Church must not fail to take to the Poles the Gospel of Freedom.

Of all the Slavs the religious situation of the Russians is by far the worst. Of all the Slavic Immigrants the Russians are the most ignorant and uneducated. They have seen the Church and Government that have been supremely powerful for centuries overthrown. They are not able to understand such a condition and will believe anything that their leaders wish to tell them. The Russians may be divided roughly into three groups here in America. The first group is that which clings to the old Orthodox Church. This number is small and is still declining. The Greek Church and Episcopal Church have become affiliated in America. In the present condition, freed from authority of the Russian government, this church can render a larger service to its people than it has done in the past. The second group and by far the largest is composed of those people who call themselves Communists. Here in America where they cannot watch first hand the conditions as they develop in Russia, they believe everything the Communist leaders tell them. They think that the Church is destroyed entirely in Russia and will have nothing to do with it here. Yet, when questioned, ninety percent of the Russian children will say that they still pray in their homes. Christ, the authority of the Church, and the autocracy of the government are so mixed in their minds that they cannot think clearly about the Gospel of Jesus. The Communist leaders, not representing the real Russians, and many of them Jews, have no

sympathy at all for the Church and keep their followers antagonized toward all religion. Before this group can be led into a church they must see that it stands for the love of God and that that love expresses itself in service. In spite of the fact that they appear very bitter toward anything religious, these parents will allow their children to go to the Vacation Church Schools, Sunday Schools, girls' and boys' clubs, and to the summer camps supervised by the Protestant Churches. When educational clubs, forums, or mother's clubs are held in church buildings many of them avail themselves of the privileges these afford. The third group is made up of those who belong to various Russian sects, those who have given up the Church but still believe in a God of Love, and those who are gradually drifting into Protestant churches. This group is small but continues to grow. With education the Russian is able to straighten out his religious thinking.

The Jugoslavs and Bulgarians in the past have always been very loyal to the Churches of their mother countries. But in America, the same unrest possesses them as does the Czechs and Poles. If the Greek Catholic, Roman Catholic, or Protestant Churches are to survive among the Slavs, they must develop a program of service; they must minister to the deep spiritual needs of their people; they must cease to place their emphasis upon wornout dogmas, ceremonies, and empty forms and return to the simple message of Jesus Christ.

We see that in making the transition from the old country to America, the Slavic immigrant woman is thrown into a maze of problems. She comes meagerly equipped physically, spiritually, economically, and educationally. Surely, the Church of Jesus Christ must have some share in helping her find a solution to her many problems.

IV

ORGANIZATION WORK AMONG FOREIGN WOMEN

The Problem Confronting the Church In An Immigrant Community

A “FOR SALE” sign on a Protestant church in a foreign community may be interpreted very appropriately as “Failure.” A church that does not meet the ever changing problems of the neighborhood in which it is placed fails. As foreigners move into a community the older Americans move away. In order to maintain an audience, the pastor suggests following the members into the suburbs and building a new church plant. The membership, desiring to maintain a certain respectability and to worship with greater ease, accepts the pastor’s suggestion. The old building is sold to make room for a new store, factory site, or to make a club house for a foreign group, and the new suburban church is built. The Americans draw their skirts about them and leave the neighborhood to its own devices. The foreigners are left to carry on their life as best they can without American assistance. Such a church is a failure. Men wearing tall silk hats may vanish from the

congregation; the swish of ladies' silken skirts may be hushed; but this does not spell "failure." That church is a success which remains in its field and serves the people there until no people remain to serve.

As the type of people in the community changes, so the program of the church must change. When the large, well-appointed homes that previously housed but one family each whose social life was provided, begin to house from four to ten families, then the church must make provision for the social life of its community.

When the homes of the cultured Americans are filled with ignorant foreigners, the church must do its share to meet the educational needs of its field. Since it is the first duty of the church to spiritualize its community, the church in the foreign neighborhood must so develop its program to meet the problems of doubt and atheism as they arise.

Many churches dismiss their responsibility to work among the foreigners on the ground that it takes more money than they have to use. In making this statement, these churches have in mind great community houses, equipped with gymnasiums, club rooms and swimming pools. Such equipment renders splendid assistance to the social life of a church, but is not absolutely necessary in carrying on the real service of the church. More necessary than money and equipment, is a group of consecrated men and women who will pledge

themselves to undertake the task. As they proceed intelligently step by step, they will be able to make the proper building adjustments to meet their needs. A fine, well appointed building with a few people is a disgrace; whereas a small insignificant building whose spirit warms the hearts of its people and takes to them the high ideals of Jesus, no matter how crowded it may be, will be honored for its work because it is helping to establish the Kingdom of Heaven.

The work of organizing and carrying on work among foreigners is not hard if undertaken systematically and patiently. Customs and traditions cannot be broken easily. Hearts that have been disappointed in the promise of one church find it hard to respond quickly to the message of another. In a land where all the comforts of life and all the outward signs of equality and respectability can be earned, very often the desire for material gain clouds the yearnings of the heart. The task of giving the Protestant message of Jesus is a long, slow process; but when the fruits of this labor begin to appear, then do the words of Jesus Christ reveal their full meaning:

“Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall find it.”

Organizations Meeting the Needs of the Foreigners

Before the church was awake to its responsibility to the foreigner, many people prompted by the

spirit of Christ set about to meet this responsibility. Settlement houses such as Hull House of Chicago, South End House of Boston and Hiram House of Cleveland were established. In this movement, men and women, forgetting themselves, unselfishly gave up their homes and went to live in foreign communities. Their chief desire was to alleviate suffering. They found the needs of the foreigners to be many: Sickness, poverty, ignorance, superstition and hatred, with all their attending sorrows. The settlement houses did their best to transform the environment about them. They carried on classes to teach English, good citizenship, trades and household arts. Gymnasiums, game rooms, musicals and other recreational activities were established. Day nurseries, free medical clinics and employment bureaus were opened. Food and clothing were distributed in case of need. Every apparent condition of the foreigner was provided for.

In addition to the settlement houses, other organizations developed departments for the care of the immigrant. Among these were juvenile court systems, legal aid societies, day nursery associations, charity organizations, travelers' aid societies and the various activities of the Young Men's Christian Association and the Young Women's Christian Association. National organizations among the various foreign groups began to serve their less fortunate brothers. The public schools saw their responsibility for the education of the

immigrant and opened courses of instruction for them. As these organizations increased they often found their duties and territories overlapping. Rather than duplicate effort and work, these organizations began to cooperate and work in harmony with each other. A splendid illustration of such cooperation may be found in the Welfare Federation of Cleveland, Ohio. No matter what the need of a family might be, one telephone call to the Welfare Federation office will put the inquirer in touch with the proper agency to meet the need.

At last, here and there, Protestant churches woke up to the fact that they, too, ought to be doing something to help the foreigner. They looked about them to see what was being done and their eyes fell upon the attractive work of the settlement houses that was doing so much to cure the bodily ills of the foreigner. Surely that was the work of the Master himself! The churches, ashamed of their long neglect, decided that they, too, must carry on activities similar to the settlement houses. Accordingly, great settlements sprang up under the management of church authorities. Some of them carried on the old church activities and added the new features; others discarded the old program entirely. At last, as they saw sick people healed under their care, hungry children fed and the naked clothed, the churches felt that they had found a means by which they could render their service to the foreigner.

*Who Shall Meet the Needs of the Foreign Woman?***1. The Responsibility of the State.**

Since in this discussion, we are interested in the foreign woman, let us see what her needs are. After carefully studying the situation, we shall agree that they may be classified as follows: 1. Health and Sanitation; 2. Employment; 3. Legal Aid; 4. Charity Relief; 5. Education; 6. Social Life; 7. Spiritual Life. If these are the needs, who shall meet them? Are they all the responsibility of the church or do some belong exclusively to the church and others to the state and private organizations? Everyone will agree that it is the duty of the state to care for the health and sanitation of her people. People have a right to look to the state for assistance in times of non-employment. In cases of need, legal aid should be furnished by the state. Very obviously, education is a civic responsibility. We shall agree, also, that certain phases of relief and social life are matters for the concern of the state. Settlement houses, the Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A. and other private organizations as well as the church, may assist in these responsibilities.

2. The Responsibility of the Church.

But what of the spiritual life of the foreign woman? Is it the duty of the state to minister to that? All true Americans will say immediately, "Indeed not!" The church and state in America must forever remain separate! Do any of the agencies of the Welfare Federation meet the spiritual

needs of the foreign woman? If they were answering the question, they would say, "Yes," for to them the relief of suffering and ignorance is spiritual. But Christ very definitely differentiates between physical and spiritual needs.

Christ places the teaching of the Way of Life above ministering to the temporal needs. He teaches us that man is led by an inner light, the ideals of men are of more importance than their physical wants. He teaches that his Way of life is a lifting process which pulls men and women out of the slough and mire of physical life and keeps them ever climbing Godward. Therefore, to meet the spiritual needs of the foreign woman, must we not help her find a personal God with whom she may have communion and to whom she may go for help and guidance and strength? Must we not show her the perfect life of Jesus by which she can measure her own life? If given the inspiration of the life of Jesus, would not the immigrant woman naturally grow dissatisfied with her rude surroundings and do all in her power to overcome them? Should not, then, the process of helping her come through the spiritual life by showing her her needs in the right perspective and then helping her to meet them? Very often it takes years to bring a foreign woman to accept Christ and all the while her physical needs must be met. But an institution that is equipped to teach the life of Christ as well as minister to the physical needs is the institution that can meet the spiritual needs of the immigrant woman.

A POLISH GIRLS' CLUB



Settlement houses, the International Institute of the Y. W. C. A. and other social agencies cannot meet this need. Time after time, the men and women in charge of these institutions testify to the fact that they help the people all they can without mentioning the name of Christ or of the church. They try to show in their lives and acts the love of Christ and thus do their share to bring them spiritual food. A superintendent of a church settlement not long ago said he felt it unnecessary to have a church service or a church school. He thought it was enough to live among these people doing good as Christ did. Such a position presupposes a great deal. Men and women prompted by the spirit of Christ can do much good by trying to live like him. But how imperfectly does the best of us live in comparison to the Master! Can anyone reflect the Master perfectly in his own life? Was it not the knowledge of the life of Christ that prompted the unselfish motive of these people to live for others and thus on the higher plane? Then, dare they omit the teaching of the life of Christ from their program built to reflect Christ? Must they not give these neighbors the Bible and help them to understand it so that they might have the source of the knowledge of Jesus Christ? Since they received their inspiration from Christ, must they not open up that life to those whom they are trying to inspire? This task can be accomplished only by an organization equipped to give religious education, namely, the church.

But social and state agencies are right when they say they cannot meet this phase of the foreign woman's needs. Since the church is the only agency which can attempt this problem, this ought to be the primary function of the church. The church must not close her eyes to the existing physical needs of her community. Where organizations exist to care for them, the church must cooperate to maintain them. Where agencies are lacking, the church must do her share to promote them. But always, the emphasis must be on the spiritual needs.

*A Concrete Example of Organization Among Foreign
Women*

In order to make the discussion of this problem concrete and simple, let us imagine a typical case. The First Christian Church of A—— developed a foreign problem. Some of its members had moved from the neighborhood and foreigners were taking their places. The official board decided not to run away but to face this problem. A committee from the board was appointed to study the problem and to recommend the necessary changes of program. This committee realized they had a big task before them, for, although the official board was almost unanimous for this work, there were a great many people in the congregation who did not have the vision for immigrant work. These people were

perfectly willing to give money for foreign missions but to become missionaries themselves right in their own home city did not appeal to them. This new committee called "The Committee on Community Problems" had enough faith in humanity to believe that if all of the people in the church had a chance to do some work among these foreigners and in so doing found a real task for the church, they would respond heartily to the new program. Therefore, the first thing the committee had to do was to put everybody to work. They outlined the work to be done and found that one of their tasks was the problem of the foreign woman. The committee felt that if they could interest Mrs. Jones' class of married ladies in this project, if it were at all possible of accomplishment, it would be done. The problem of studying the foreign woman's situation and of recommending a program of work among them was put before this class. As was the usual spirit of the ladies, they accepted the challenge enthusiastically. A committee of three women to supervise the work was appointed and every member of the class pledged herself to do a share in this new undertaking.

1. Learning the Needs of the Women.

The committee on supervision realized at their first meeting that to know what the needs of the foreign women in their community were they must go into their homes and become acquainted with them. One member suggested making a survey of the community, going from house to house to

learn their nationality, creed, and the general needs of the family. But the chairman of the committee whose husband was a physician and worked among these people questioned this plan. She had learned that these people were suspicious of everything that smacked of officialdom; that concerning creed no correct data could be secured through a survey because the foreigner when asked what church he belonged to would always say Catholic whether he had given up the Church or not. This answer would be given to avoid any unpleasantness with the neighborhood priests. Very often among the Czechs one would find those who were brave enough to tell the truth regarding their church relationships, and more recently among the Russians, but among all foreigners with Catholic background a stranger could not be sure of the truth of their answers. The chairman felt also that in a survey call the feeling of open friendship was lacking. So the plan of the survey was not adopted. Instead the committee decided to ask the members of the class to call upon these women just as they would call upon new Americans who might move into the community. The object of the call would be to invite the children to Sunday School, to learn the physical and spiritual needs of the home, and to get any other information possible without hurting the pride of the foreign woman.

At first, it seemed impossible to get an adequate calling list, but the committee was surprised finally at the number of families they secured. On the

Sunday School roll they found the names of seven children who had come once or twice to the Sunday School; the pastor of the church had the names and addresses of four families where he had been called upon in cases of death; the chairman's husband was able to contribute twelve names; a member of the class whose daughter was a librarian in the community was able to give five names; and by the time that all the resources were exhausted, the committee found that they had a list of thirty-six different foreign families living within walking distance of the church. They adopted Jesus' plan of calling and decided to send the women of the class out two by two into these homes. The teams were made up, the calling lists organized, and on the following Sunday the work was placed before the class. The women were to have two weeks in which to make their calls after which a special weekly class meeting was to be held for reports.

The results of these visits were very fruitful. Mrs. F. found that Mrs. Simnovick's baby was suffering from a very bad case of imbitigo. Mrs. Simnovitch could not speak English very well but had explained brokenly that she had secured a doctor who charged five dollars for his call and had left some ointment which she did not know how to use. She could not afford to have the doctor again, but tearfully explained that the baby was growing worse steadily. On investigation, Mrs. F. found that the mother knew nothing about the free dispensary connected with the City Hospital. With-

out delay the women took the baby to the dispensary where the child was well cared for. Two of the women found that neither of the women on whom they called could speak English and had to depend upon a conversation with the children. Though the mothers could not understand their faces brightened as the children translated for the visitors. At one home two little children were found alone with the door locked. A neighbor explained that the mother worked every day in a restaurant and left a lunch of bread and coffee for the children whom she locked in the house. The children were not old enough to go to school. Two of the women found a Mrs. Sladky in tears. Her husband had been out of work for eight weeks because of a long series of carbuncles and now the family was penniless. The neighborhood grocer was trusting them for food but Mrs. Sladky had a horror of running large bills. She had tried to find work but was unsuccessful. The visitors had the joy of getting her work as a cleaning woman in an office and each had sent her a large basket of food. Mrs. Dvorak could not speak English but showed by her face that she was beside herself with grief. She had called a neighbor woman in to talk with her visitors, hoping that they might help her. Her fourteen year old son Gustav had been arrested with some other boys and taken to the detention home without her knowledge. She could not understand the offense he had committed nor the sentence which had been passed. The visitors were

still working on the case and hoped to straighten it out satisfactorily. In both of their calls two women found that the families were staunch Catholics and they did nothing that might offend them.

There were many other very interesting reports but all of them carried with them this testimony: the foreign mothers were bearing great burdens both physically and spiritually; they needed the hope and inspiration of Jesus to put meaning into the tasks that otherwise were drudgery. Many of them could not speak the English language, most of them had no social life at all. With the exception of three women who went to a Bohemian National Club, and a few who belonged to a Crocheting Club, the social life of most of them consisted in resting on the door-step and telling their troubles to their neighbors, or trying to forget them for an evening at a moving picture show.

2. Discovering the Organization Already at Work among the Foreign Women.

The Executive Committee decided that the church did not have resources enough to meet all the needs of the foreign women nor was it their responsibility to do so. Therefore, they decided to find out what organizations were already at work in their community. Seven committees were appointed, each to investigate a phase of the community problem. The work of each committee was well outlined and as the women worked at their tasks new problems opened before them and new solutions presented themselves. The reports of the investigations were as follows:

(1.) Committee on health and sanitation: This committee found the laws regulating health and sanitation all to be desired. Connected with the City Hospital was a free dispensary that was open every morning for public use. A great many people made use of the dispensary but no special effort was made to advertise it among the foreigners. In their visitation of the community this committee found that the inspection of stores was very well carried out and that all but one store was clean. That store was owned and managed by a Polish Jew. A note was made of this and sent to the Health Department. The garbage disposal in the neighborhood of the church was not well cared for. Women testified that even in the heat of the summer their cans stood unemptied for a whole week. This was reported at once. From a Bohemian woman who spoke English very well and kept a neighborhood grocery store the committee learned a great deal concerning the medical situation. The women seemed to know something about the dispensary but unless they spoke English they had a hard time to make the physicians and nurses understand their conditions and they seldom knew how to carry out the directions upon returning home. For those who could afford to pay a physician something it was not hard to find one who could speak their language or in whom they had faith. At the time of confinement a great many of the women used midwives who could give little in-

struction regarding the necessary precautions to be taken before and after birth. In the case of communicable diseases very often the mothers did not take seriously enough the proper regulations. In the case of the State, the committee felt that it was not taking as keen an interest in the welfare of the foreigners as was necessary, and the attitude of the foreigners themselves was due to a lack of proper knowledge regarding American life.

(2.) Committee on Employment: This committee found that there was no provision made by the city government to assist the unemployed in securing positions, nor was there any provision made for the care of children whose mothers were compelled to work all day away from home. By inquiring at the Board of Education they learned that whenever possible the foreigners evaded the school laws regarding the working of school children. The committee felt this was due to a lack of appreciation on the part of the parents for higher education. They found that the foreign mothers were employed in factories, as dishwashers in restaurants, as office cleaners, as laundresses, in house-work by the day, and in keeping boarders. They were surprised at the number working and learned that with few exceptions every mother was doing something to help increase the family income.

(3.) Committee on Legal Service: This committee went directly to the Court House to see what provision was made for juvenile court cases. Court was in session when they arrived and they were

admitted to listen to the cases on the docket that morning. They were amazed at the number of foreigners who had to appear with their children, some for minor offenses and others for things more serious. It was heart breaking to see parents who wanted to plead for their children but were handicapped by the language, others who seemed indifferent to the welfare of their children, but most appealing were the children who had to come in contact with the seamy side of American life at a very early age. The committee found the Judge and the Probation officers to be very humane persons delighted in the interest the women were taking and desirous of cooperating with them. Every courtesy was extended to them, the entire system of probation and detention was explained to them, and they were permitted to visit the detention home for children. But they discovered no organization whose primary motive was to give aid to foreign women who needed it and were unable to pay for it.

(4.) Committee on Charity Relief: This committee found a great many organizations furnishing help of a material sort. All of the religious bodies were lavish with their gifts but had no system in their giving nor a central office through which the donations went. In addition to the churches the schools, factories, and private individuals gave abundantly to the poor. But with no central clearing house for their charity, the distribution of gifts was not sane. Some families were over cared for while others went without the necessary aid.

(5.) Committee on Education: The committee on education felt that there were three phases of education to investigate: the teaching of English to Foreigners, Citizenship Classes, and classes for trades and household arts. The results of their investigation showed that the Board of Education conducted night schools for the teaching of English but very few women attended. The classes for citizenship, likewise, were not patronized by the foreign women. Except for the classes in household arts conducted by the public school for the girls and for the work of a Settlement House that reached a few foreign women, nothing was being done to teach the immigrant woman how to keep house in America.

(6.) Committee on Social Life: The social committee investigated the matter of playgrounds, parks, moving picture shows, bowling alleys, and dance floors. They found that there was only one small playground in the entire neighborhood of the church though there were several spots that were unused and could be converted easily into playgrounds. A great many of the foreign children and some of the mothers used the city parks in the summertime. There were two moving picture shows in the community both doing a thriving business. The shows attended by the committee were of a cheap grade and contained nothing educational. There were two large bowling alleys and six pool rooms that seemed to be busy all the time.

There were three dance floors, one owned by a dancing school, another belonging to the Bohemian National Hall, and the third located over a large department store and owned by a Pole who rented it to any club or organization who wanted it. Occasionally, the mothers went to the dance halls when the National Clubs brought all the families together; some went quite regularly to the moving picture houses; weddings, christenings, and funerals attracted many of them, but on the whole, the life of the foreign mothers was very hum-drum.

(7.) Spiritual Life: The committee on spiritual life decided that the needs of these mothers were the same as all mothers. They must have something to take them away from their daily tasks occasionally, something that would refresh their spirits and give their work meaning. As they cooked and cleaned and washed and ironed, day in and day out, that their children might be well and healthy and look clean and attractive, they must feel that they are not contributing alone to their physical well-being but are being able to help their boys and girls grow into worthwhile men and women. They must learn to feel that there is something eternal and everlasting for which they are working. This spiritual help must come through the Church.

3. A Suggested Program for the Church:

Each committee presented the executive committee with recommendations in their particular investigation. After studying these recommenda-

tions, combining those that overlapped, or discarding those which seemed to be unnecessary, the executive committee reached the third step in their work. They prepared a plan of procedure or program for the class to use in carrying on its work with the foreign women of the neighborhood. After the class had passed upon it, it was presented to the Pastor and the Official Board of the Church. The Pastor and Official Board were delighted with the work the women had done and voted unanimously to stand back of the women in their efforts to make the program a reality. This program was as follows:

"The Loyal Women's Class of the First Christian Church of A———, after studying for three months the problems of the foreign women in our community, wish to make the following suggestions for work among them:

As a class of women representing a church we feel that our first duty toward the foreign women of our community is to give them spiritual food. But just as the Master ministered to the physical wants of people in need, so we, too, must render physical as well as spiritual aid when necessary. We feel that certain types of work are purely the responsibility of the State, some of private organizations other than the Church, and some are the responsibility of the Church alone. Those tasks that are ours we propose to assume as far as possible, those of the State and private organizations which are not cared for at present we shall assume

as best we can until the proper authorities take them over. In the meantime we shall make it our duty to bring the attention of the public to the responsibilities it should carry.

(1.) Suggestions to the State and Private Organizations:

The following are a number of suggestions we intend to make to civic authorities:

- a. Check up regularly on garbage disposal in all foreign neighborhoods.
- b. Print in the various foreign languages spoken in our city and distribute information regarding the use of the dispensary.
- c. Employ two visiting nurses capable of speaking at least one of these languages. The duties of these nurses should be to attend during clinic hours and to make follow-up calls in the homes for purposes of help and instruction.
- d. We would suggest that plans be started for a neighborhood clinic to be placed by the city hospital in our community. An educational campaign for better health could be carried on in a neighborhood clinic more effectively than by an organization located at a distance.
- e. We would recommend that the city establish a free employment bureau to which people in need of work could turn. This department might assume the nature of vocational guidance and cooperation with the Board of Education.
- f. Since it is impossible for many mothers to attend the evening schools, afternoon classes in

English and good citizenship should be established. For mothers who cannot leave their homes or are too timid to do so, afternoon or evening kitchen classes should be established. In case enough teachers cannot be secured by the Board of Education, the women of the Church would be willing to volunteer as teachers of English.

g. A day nursery with a nursery school program should be established in our community by the Board of Education to care for the children of mothers who find it necessary to work during the day.

h. We would recommend to the Park Department that the two vacant lots at Twelfth and Hancock Streets be purchased and developed into a community playground.

i. To the Board of Censorship we would recommend that an investigation be made of the type of moving pictures shown at the "Strand" and "Silver Screen" theatres and that the laws of censorship be enforced in these two playhouses.

We hope to interest the various clubs and private organizations in the following plan:

We would suggest that steps be taken to unite all agencies engaged in giving charity relief under a common board. Such an organization might be called the "United Welfare Agencies of A_____." This organization will have for its purpose the aiding and rehabilitating of unfortunate families. It would represent the City Hall, City Hospital, Board of Education, the Public Library, the various re-

ligious bodies, Women's Federated Clubs, and any other organizations that have an altruistic aim. The support of this work would have a legitimate place in a Community Chest Fund. Some of the duties of the United Welfare Organization would be to direct persons in need to the proper agency of relief, to investigate cases applying to them for any sort of aid, to keep a complete file of all cases receiving aid from any source, to promote all phases of education among foreigners, and to co-operate constructively with all agencies for public welfare.

(2) The Program Within the Church.

Since the interests of the mothers are bound up in the lives of their children, in order to help the mothers, we must have our work so organized as to take in the entire family. The program of our church must consist first of a fully organized church school with the following divisions:

a. Children's Division—

Nursery Dep't.	Ages	1-3
Beginner's "	"	4-5
Primary "	"	6-8
Junior "	"	9-11

b. Young People's Division—

Intermediate Dep't.	Ages	12-14
Senior "	"	15-17
Young People's "	"	18-25

c. Adult Division—

Women's Class
Men's Class
Young Married People's Class

Since in our Christian teaching, we throw out ideals for social life, we must give our people a certain amount of social activity. With wholesome programs, these social activities may be made educational as well. They should take the following forms:

- a. Story Hours for Children under the Junior age. Also seasonable parties.
- b. Beginning with the Junior age and continuing throughout the church school, we should form clubs which are based on the "Four Fold" life. These clubs should be formed within department ages. Boys and girls and men and women, regardless of nationality, will be admitted to these clubs, the only requirement for active membership being bona fide membership in the church school.
- c. We realize that it will be impossible to get the mothers to come to the church or church school without breaking down the wall of timidity and ignorance regarding our church. For that reason, we intend to conduct a "Home Department" such as has been tried with great success in two other churches working among the Slavic immigrants of Cleveland, Ohio. We shall modify their program to fit our needs.
- d. In order to create a high moral atmosphere during the summer vacation months through religious education, we would suggest that the church maintain for five weeks a vacation church school. If well advertised, such a school should bring us in

touch with many new families. The service rendered to the children and mothers by such a school would be immeasurable.

e. In order to present wholesome recreation and create an ideal in the minds of our neighbors for worth-while entertainment, we would suggest that our church conduct a lecture course next winter. We would suggest having eight numbers of the best type we could secure and selling the tickets at cost price.

f. Every three months, we would have a family night when all the clubs would be invited to join in a happy time together. In the summer this family party may be turned into a picnic.

g. We feel that the best service we can render to the mothers of our community is to teach them and their children how to take care of themselves. So we shall do everything we can to train the boys and girls and parents to maintain their organizations.

h. We realize that many of our recommendations are ideals which we ourselves cannot attain. But we have a voice in making the civic programs and we shall do all in our power to create the right sentiment regarding the welfare of our women. In the meantime, while we are waiting for this program to develop, we are asking a number of the members of our church to serve on a general Social Service Committee. We are asking this committee to meet from time to time with us to discuss problems of social service, and individually when there

are problems that their particular training makes them capable of solving.

i. As a class we still consider it our problem to care for the visitation in our community, to stand ready to fill any place of service that this program calls for, and to care for new problems as they arise.

Signed—The Loyal Women.”

Just as this church went about sanely and logically to meet its problem, so any church can. Instead of running away from its foreign problem the church can meet it. The Loyal Women's Class used the right method in organizing work among the foreign women, namely:

1. Learning the needs of the women in the community.
2. Discovering what organizations were already at work and the amount and effectiveness of their work.
3. Selecting the responsibilities of the church and planning a program to meet them.

V

THE HOME DEPARTMENT OF THE CHURCH

*The Origin of the Home Department of the Broadway
Christian Church*

FOR many years the Home Department of the Church School program has rendered a unique service. Shut-ins, house-wives, and men and women who work at home or away from home on Sundays may be kept in touch with the Church School through the medium of this department. For a long time the Home Department of the Aetna Road Christian Church of Cleveland, Ohio, had rendered this service, when suddenly, it was vested with a new and deeper meaning. The old membership of the church was moving farther out into the suburbs and selling their property for factory sites and to the foreigners who were employed in these factories. As the community changed new problems arose before the church, among them the problem of the Sunday School. The fine large classes had disappeared and a new type of boys and girls were filling the class rooms. As the Pastor went from home to home, he found that the community had become almost solidly foreign. In many of the homes he found a poverty of spirit

brought about by the lack of love of Jesus. Indifference, atheism, and skepticism abounded everywhere. He realized that if he were to do his duty by the community in which he was working he must bring new life into the homes. This he could do only by inspiring the mothers with the ideals of Jesus Christ.

Though they never urged nor encouraged it, many of the mothers were willing enough to let their children run off to Sunday School, but they themselves would not be interested. The Pastor realized he must meet this need some way and studied the organizations of his church to find the one by which he could reach these mothers. It wasn't the Ladies' Aid Society because these women needed spiritual food. It wasn't the Women's Missionary Society because these foreign women could not yet appreciate the purpose of such an organization. The Home Department included adults, why not use it? Immediately, the name of Home Department was vested with a larger and richer meaning. It would be used to build new homes filled with the spirit of Christ!

The Organization of the Home Department

Before it reached its present form of organization, the Home Department of the Aetna Road Church went through many stages of experiment. For five years it has borne its present form which has proved very fruitful and has served for a pat-

tern to two other churches trying to meet the same needs. First of all, it was moved and had to change its name. The Aetna Road property was sold and a lot a few blocks further away from the factories yet closer to the people was purchased. In April, 1914, a fine new building was opened and dedicated. This new building was called the "Broadway Christian Church" because it was to serve a large territory lying back of the main thoroughfare, Broadway. The Home Department of the Broadway Christian Church became a vital factor in the neighborhood and today has the love and respect of hundreds of mothers.

1. Form of Organization:

(1.) Aim:

The aim of the Home Department may be most fittingly expressed by the paragraph which appears on the program for 1924-25 and bears the title "Our Faith." It says:

"We believe in God as our Father who loves us, leads us, inspires us, and forgives us; we believe in Jesus Christ, His Son, as our Teacher, our Master, our Friend, and our Savior; we believe in the worthiness of our own lives and the nobler purposes of our womanhood; therefore, we have banded our lives together in this holy faith for the enrichment of ourselves and the blessings of others.

This is our Faith."

(2.) Membership:

There are three different kinds of members in

the Home Department, the active, the associate, and the prospective members. The nucleus around which this department is built is a group of women from the adult women's class and some Sunday School teachers. These women form the basis for the active membership to which are added all other women who come regularly enough to the monthly meetings to have their names appear on the secretary's book. Twice a year the secretary's book is revised and the names of non-attendants are crossed off. Associate members are those who have signified their willingness to join the Home Department but have been taken off of the book for non-attendance or have not yet appeared at a meeting. The prospective membership are those women upon whom calls should be made to interest them in this organization. This list is gathered through Sunday School calling, suggestions from friends and neighbors, and often by following the moving vans. A woman need only state her desire to do so in order to become a member. An accurate card file list of all the members is kept in the church office.

(3.) *Financial Maintenance:*

The department is self-supporting and is able to contribute various enterprises of the church. No regular dues are connected with the organization because of the varying financial conditions of the members, but an offering is taken at each meeting.

(4.) *Officers and Committees:*

The officers of this department are the superin-

tendent who is directly responsible for the entire organization; the president, vice president and secretary-treasurer. The last three officers named are chosen each year by a nominating committee of the department. There are four committees appointed each year; the visitor's committee, welfare committee, hostess committee and the foreign-speaking committee.

(5.) Meetings:

The Home Department meets the first Thursday evening of every month from October through June.

2. The Duties of the Committees:

(1.) The Executive Committee:

The duties of the executive committee are similar to those of any organization. These officers are selected by a nominating committee, guided by the pastor and superintendent. It is necessary to select women for these positions who are tactful, filled with the Christian spirit and faithful to the ideals of the Home Department. They, in turn, select the other three committees of the organization. It is the aim of the executive committee to put every woman to work as soon as she is able, starting with small duties and working into places of greater responsibility. This committee determines the nature of the programs and the policy of the department on matters of vital concern. There are no stated times at which this committee meets.

(2.) The Visitor's Committee:

The Visitor's Committee is of great importance.

In fact, the Department could not exist without the work of this committee. With the members of the Executive Committee who always are included this committee has from ten to fifteen members. No woman is asked to be a Visitor until she has accepted Christ and has been in the Home Department at least six months. This committee meets in September, January, and March.

Each Visitor is given a list of women upon whom she is to call. All of the members, active, associate, and prospective, are divided among the Visitors. The aim of the distribution of names is not equality in numbers, much more thought than that being given to this work. Usually, either the Pastor or the Superintendent has seen each member or prospective member and knows what kind of a woman will make the greatest appeal to each. Some women make better visitors than others and do not find it such hard work. Therefore, the names are divided intelligently among the women regardless of number.

The Visitor is a guardian of her list. She is supposed to call upon her women at least once a month preferably just before the monthly meeting. If any of her members are sick or in trouble, she must report the fact. In short, the Visitor must keep her finger on the pulse of the homes assigned to her and, in turn, keep the Pastor, Superintendent, or Executive Committee informed concerning its activities. Occasionally, at the monthly meetings the Visitors are called upon to report the num-

ber of calls made and the number of their women present. A happy rivalry is stimulated in this way and the visitors are spurred on to greater efforts.

The work of the Visitor is not easy and is often discouraging.

Very seldom does one call bring a woman to the Home Department meeting. It takes real faith in one's task to call month after month and year after year to persuade a woman that you have a "Pearl of Great Price" waiting for her. It is quite common in a Visitor's meeting for some woman to say, "Please don't give me Mrs. S! I've called there every month for a year and can't do anything with her. Perhaps a new face will have a better effect upon her." If it seems wise the change is made or the Visitor is filled with new faith. But the Visitor is rewarded for her labor when after long and tireless effort, one of the associate members or prospective members finally does come to the meeting. Invariably the new member will sit with her eyes and ears wide open, a look of amazement and keen interest on her face, and when it is all over she will say, "My! If I had known it was like this I would have come before! I'm going to tell Mrs. T. about it, I know she'll want to come!" Right there the Visitor has made an active member and added a prospective member to her list. But the greatest joy comes into the heart of the Visitor when she is privileged to witness some one of her members accept Christ as her Personal Saviour.

(3.) The Service Committee:

While the Home Department is rendering its membership real service it is giving them also the joy of serving others. The Service Committee has the following duties:

- a. When cases of need or sickness are brought to the attention of the Home Department, the Service Committee, either by doing it themselves or assigning the work to others, sees that the need is met. Flowers are taken to the sick, baskets of food and clothes to the poor, or a pretty gift to a member blessed with a new baby.
- b. When dishes, cooking utensils, tea towels, or other equipment is needed by the church, this committee represents the Department in meeting the obligation.
- c. The Home Department has chosen the Cleveland Christian Home for their particular mission station. There are three distinct pieces of service they render to it for which the Service Committee is responsible:
 - (a) Twice during the year, the committee declares a "Cookie" night when all the members are asked to bring some home-made cookies for the orphans. Various kinds of cookies appear; American, Polish, Bohemian, English, Welsh and others. The women respond joyously to these special nights.
 - (b) At the regular monthly meetings an extra collection is taken for the "Easter Fund." Just before Easter this money is turned into a check and sent to the Cleveland Christian Home. The sum varies from five to twenty dollars.

(c) A weekly sewing day is maintained at the Home when the women of the various churches take their turn mending old clothes and making new supplies. The Home Department women do their share in this task and enjoy it. In fact, they have the reputation for rendering the best and most faithful service.

(4.) The Hostess Committee:

The work of the Hostess Committee takes place at the regular monthly meetings. The members of this committee must be good representatives of the organization as they are always very much in evidence at the meetings and new women are apt to form their opinion of the Department from these women. The duties of this committee are:

a. To welcome women at the door, make them acquainted with the other women present and to make them feel at home.

b. This committee selects the special hostess for each meeting and helps her select those who are to assist her. The special hostess and her assistants plan and provide the lunch for the evening. The Hostess Committee assists in serving the food and is responsible for seeing that the kitchen is left in good condition.

(5.) The Foreign Speaking Committee:

There are many women in the community who cannot speak English. Therefore, a committee of women who can speak both English and some

other language is appointed to care for them. The duties of this committee are:

a. To call upon the foreign-speaking women or to have their names assigned to those visitors who can speak some foreign language.

b. To enlist them in an English Class. If they cannot attend the night schools provided by the city and the city cannot send a teacher during the day or a special kitchen class teacher for the evening, this committee must provide a teacher for them. After the women have become acquainted with the church, they may be enrolled in an English class held at the church. Every effort is made by this committee to enlist them in the civic classes.

c. Whenever there is an opportunity to get these women to a church gathering, it is the responsibility of this committee to invite them and to make them feel at home when they come.

3. The Program of the Home Department.

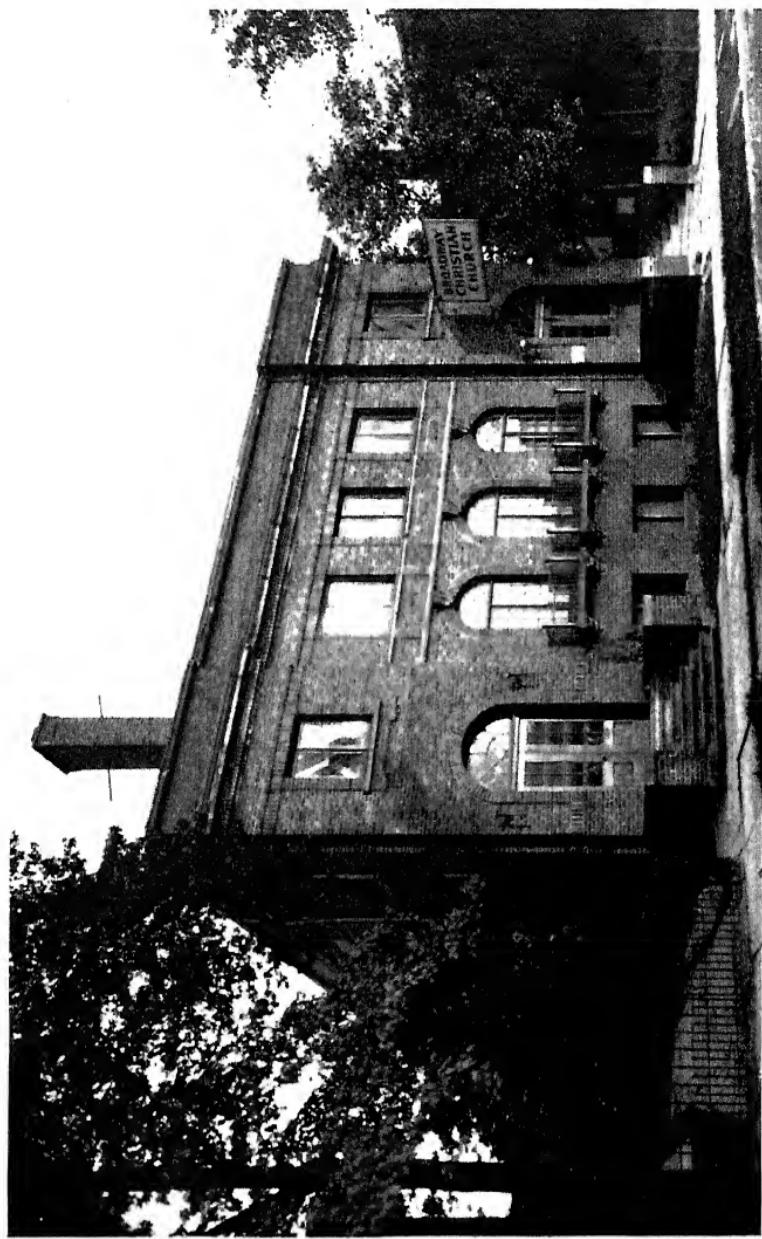
(1.) Getting the Women Out to the Meeting:

The problem of getting the women to attend the Home Department meetings has been touched on before. It cannot be mentioned too often. It is a long and trying process to build up a substantial group who come regularly to the meetings. Though the number of active and associate members may be as large as one hundred and twenty-five an average attendance of fifty would be considered very good. When a meeting comes but once a month, and the women with whom you are dealing are burdened with household cares, many things

may occur to keep them home. In October 1919, the first time the Home Department of the Broadway Christian Church met in the evening, there were seventeen ladies present, in the October meeting of 1920 there were twenty-five present, and in 1921, thirty-seven. The average attendance had grown in proportion being for 1921-22, fifty-five. The most important method of bringing the women is by calling upon them. The telephone, postal cards, and church paper may be used. From Sunday to the day of the meeting every effort of the Pastor, Superintendent, and Visitor's Committee should be directed toward getting the women out to the program.

(2.) A General Outline of the Program of the Home Department:

It is very important to have something worthwhile for the women when they do come to the meeting. Many different kinds of programs were tried varying from the purely social to the religious. It was found that those programs that included the religious talks were the most successful. Finally, certain principles in the building of the program were decided upon. Each program was to care for the spiritual, educational, and social needs of the women and the business of the Department. The primary motive of each meeting would be to give the women an inspirational, spiritual message. Then, by presenting very wholesome and cultural entertainment, create in the women a desire for the best recreation. In a half hour of



BROADWAY CHRISTIAN CHURCH, CLEVELAND, OHIO

fellowship at which time the hostesses would serve the lunch it was hoped that the warmth of Christian friends would bring a glow into the heart of every woman and send her away feeling that she had been close to the Master himself. After such a meeting, the committee felt that every woman present would want to live her life on a nobler plane.

It was found that the women themselves through the Hostess Committee could take care of the social hour but the Bible message and the entertainment had to be planned differently. It was decided that only those who understood the backgrounds from which the women came could help them spiritually. That task usually falls heavily upon the Pastor, his wife, and the Superintendent of the Department. No money could be spent on the entertainment so people were asked to volunteer their services. Talented people from other churches in the city were called upon to play, to sing, or to read. People were very kind and splendid talent was brought to these meetings.

A program must be planned for the foreign speaking women for the same evening. The prayer meeting should be conducted for them in the language they understand best. It is very hard to secure a spiritual leader for these people. But if possible, a leader should be secured for each nationality. The same lessons may be followed as with the English speaking women. If the entertainment is the kind both groups can appreciate,

the groups may come together to enjoy it. All the groups join each other in the social hour. It is the duty of the Foreign Speaking Committee to make the women feel at home and to meet other women who can converse with them. This helps to bridge the gulf between the foreign speaking woman and her English-speaking neighbors, and assists her in learning the language.

The following is an outline of a typical program:

Theme—Jesus, the Mother's Friend;

I. Devotional:

1. Hymn—Now the Day is Over.
2. Invocation.
3. Hymn—My Jesus, I Love Thee.
4. Talk—Jesus, the Mother's Friend—
By the Pastor's Wife.
5. Prayer—Pastor.
6. Hymn—What a Friend We Have in Jesus!

II. Entertainment:

Special Violin Music—Both Foreign Speaking and English Groups together.

III. Business Meeting:

1. Roll Call.
2. Minutes of last meeting.
3. Report of Committees.
4. Old Business.
5. New Business.
6. Offering.

IV. Social Hour:

Coffee and Bohemian Pastry served.

Benediction and adjournment.

- c. The following are sample programs for two years:

First Year:

Topic for the year: Jesus' Way—I am the Way.

Special Bible reading—The Gospel of Luke—One chapter weekly.

1. The Mission of Life—Luke 2:49—My Father's Business.
2. What is your Life?—Luke 12:15—Life not Things.
3. Learning to Live—Luke 10:27-29—This Do and thou shalt Live.
4. Building the New Life—Luke 6: 46-49—Building on the Rock.
5. Discipleship of Jesus—Luke 14:25-33—Bear the Cross and Follow.
6. Becoming a Christian—Luke 9:59—Follow Christ.
7. Dedication of Life to Christ—Luke 12:8—Confess Christ.
8. Clothed with New Power—Luke 24:49—Power from on High.
9. Christian Witnesses—Luke 24:48—Ye are Witnesses.

Second Year:

Topic for the Year: God answers the needs of our every day life.

Special Bible reading for the year—The Book of Psalms—One Psalm Daily.

1. How God Cares for Us—Ps. 23, Matt. 6:25-34.
The Lord is My Shepherd.
2. What God teaches about Thanksgiving—Psalm 138; Matt. 11:25-30. I will give Thee thanks with my whole heart.
3. What God teaches about Loving Kindness. Psalm 36:5-11. I. Cor. 13. How precious is thy loving kindness, O God!
4. How God teaches us to trust Him—Ps. 27; II. Timothy 1:8-14. Jehovah is the Strength of my life.
5. How God answers our Prayers for Help—Psalm 121; James 5:13-20. He will Keep thy Soul.
6. How God Forgives Us—Psalm 32; Matt. 6:12-15. Thou Forgavest the Iniquity of My Sin.

The Home Department in Relation to the Church

The Home Department acts as a stepping stone into the church. Women who have never been in a Protestant church, and who in their youth have been taught that to enter one is a sin, find it hard to enter the church for the first time on Sunday. Women who have neglected the church for a long time feel too self-conscious to appear the first time on Sunday. The week-night meeting of wholesome social fellowship wears the strangeness and timidity away. The lecture course provides a second means of wearing away this timidity and introducing the woman to the type of service the church renders. After the woman has come to several meetings of the Department, she should be invited

to the Sunday morning and Sunday evening services. In case she has a Catholic background, the morning service will appeal to her more strongly. An invitation to join the Women's Bible Class on Sunday should be given as soon as the woman comes into the Department. This invitation should be continued until she responds. Finally, she is asked to become a Christian. In the Broadway Christian Church, this process is continually going on. A list of the women who are ready to come into the church is made out in the fall and constructive work is done with them throughout the year. Always on Easter, two-thirds of the people entering the church are mothers of the Home Department and their relatives. Out of every fifty joining the church, at least thirty will have been directly influenced by the Home Department. The Home Department of the Broadway Christian Church is the first step many women take on their way to the Cross.

VI

THE CHALLENGE

The American Problem of Race Mixture Not Unique

AMERICA is called the melting pot of the world. Here men from every nation in the world may be found. Many people think that the United States is unique in this phenomenon of race mixture and fear that the people of our nation are doomed to become a mongrel race. As long as the immigrants were from Northern Europe and the United Kingdom, no one was alarmed. But when the source of immigration changed to Southern and Eastern Europe, consternation took possession of the American people. The question of the result of race mixture became the subject for conversation, debate, magazine articles, and books. The subject was attacked in such a way as to represent the American race question as an altogether unheard-of problem. Yet anthropological and historical research have demonstrated that there are practically no pure racial stocks. Every nation is a mixture of peoples to such a degree that we look for local characteristics rather than a uniform national type. We speak of the Northern Italian and the Sicilian, of the Northern and Southern Slav, of the

North of Ireland types. Just as Italy, Russia, England, or any European country was formed by migration and inter-mixture of many races, so America is being formed. The only difference is the difference of time. We look across and see old nations and forget the long years of construction while we are in the formative period of the American race.

Physical Danger of Race Mixture Not Real

America will be a new physical race. Franz Boas in his anthropological researches in New York City has discovered that the children born in the United States of immigrant parents actually change in their physical appearance. The Czechs have offered the best opportunity for study because they came to America very early. Czech immigrants show their Slavic characteristics in their broad faces, but the faces of their children are slightly narrower, and by the third generation the width of the face has decreased still further. Discoveries in other immigrants such as the shape of the head, and the height of the body have been found. This shows that the various European physical types that come to our shores are not absolutely permanent but can be changed in one generation in this new environment. Thus, we see that American environment actually changes the physical bodies of its people and is bringing about a new physical type. Since it has not been proved

whether round heads or long heads, tall bodies or short bodies, broad faces or narrow faces are superior, we may be sure that the physical danger of the influx of European races is not real.

Real Danger of Race Mixture is Spiritual

But, while there is no real physical danger in permitting so great a variety of European types to live in America, there is a spiritual danger. After all, the United States is not measured by its mountains, its prairies, nor its railroads, nor is it measured by the physical contour of its people. We speak of the discovery of America and immediately the picture of Columbus comes to our minds and we hear the thrilling cry, "Land! Land!" But America is not land nor was it discovered in 1492. America is a spirit, a spirit conceived in 1415 at the Council of Constance when Jan Hus was burned at the stake, and born in 1521, at the Diet of Worms when Martin Luther, standing before the greatest authority of Europe declared, ". . . My conscience is under bond to God's word. Recant I cannot and will not, for it is neither right nor wise to act against conscience. God help me. Amen." In so doing Luther freed the hearts and minds of men. Why did the Pilgrims a century later come to America?

"They came as protestors against the attempt to fetter their minds and souls by an authority which England presently destroyed. They came as pru-

dent, hard working, business men, who made a living for themselves and their children, where none had worked before. They succeeded where all previous attempts in New England had failed; they were the pilot ship for the Puritans; they lifted the big end of the dominant forces of the world. . . They were a feeble community weighted down with debt, no favorites of their king, had no backing of a rich company, no colonizing policy, no consciousness that they were making history—just a plain, substantial, honest, upright body of men, who trusted God and kept their powder dry. They educated their children; they shared in the duties and obligations of their simple government; they gave to the world a proof that can never be gainsaid,—the proof that a few human beings with high hearts and good lives can make a commonwealth and a government which is fitted to last for ages.”¹ It is this spirit, the spirit of a pioneer in moral ideas which may be endangered by the influx of alien European types.

All Immigrants Seeking Freedom and Democracy

Yet as we trace the causes of immigration we find that America has always been the haven for the oppressed people of the world. They have heard of this country for which freedom and democracy are synonyms. Since men when they mi-

1. The Mentor—Nov. 1920—“The Pilgrims.”

grate leave a fixed home, there must be some definite cause for the migration. If he were content, no man would leave his home. It is because all men are seeking freedom that they follow in the footsteps of the Pilgrims. Is this influx of freedom-loving souls a danger to American life?

"America with her unique experience of multi-form contacts of races and peoples is in a position to invest the concept of democracy with a broader and richer meaning than any nation has done thus far. She can, if she will, set to work to mold her future civilization consciously and utilize to the full the numberless heritages brought to her shores. She can, if she will, develop the principles of tolerance as no people has yet dared to do. She can, if she will, encourage the search for the unique and distinctive in social life, side by side with a strong emphasis upon the basically human interests. She can, if she will, make of herself the greatest democratic republic in the history of man."¹

Danger of Misinterpreting the Meaning of Freedom and Democracy

The danger to American life lies in the misinterpretation of the terms freedom and democracy. Dare we admit these alien peoples who have never tasted of freedom and democracy and then leave

1. Democracy and Assimilation—Drachler—Page 23.

them alone to interpret the fundamental principles of American life? When names like Rasansky, Niccolini, and McConnelly appear on our ballots, are we sure they stand for the spirit of America or do they represent the old autocratic ideals of Europe? Do we consciously set out to invest these symbols of America with their deepest and fullest meaning?

The Process of Making An American

Woodrow Wilson expressed the object of Americanization when he defined the word "freedom." He says, "Is not the greatest thought that you can have of freedom,—the thought of it as a gift that shall release men and women from all that pulls them back from being their best and from doing their best, that shall liberate their energy to its fullest limit, free their aspirations till no bounds confine them, and fill their spirits with the jubilance of realizable hope?"

The State and public spirited Americans have built organizations by which they endeavor to make Americans. A Polish mother living in a large American city expects to give birth to a child. The nurses from the pre-natal clinic have prepared the way so that this new American might be physically well-born. After his birth, the Home Nurses' Association cares for him until he has passed the danger line of infancy. Then, he is turned over to the Baby's Dispensary. When his mother starts to

work again, the day Nursery Association cares for him. Finally, he goes to kindergarten, public school, has the use of free libraries, play grounds, and city parks. His physical, mental, and social freedom are assured. What of his spiritual freedom? If we agree that America is a spirit then the deepening of American concepts must be done through the spiritual life. Some will say that in all that is done for him by the State, the immigrant child cannot avoid catching the spirit of America! Would we dare to assume that he will "catch" American health, American education, or American social ideals? Just as we must train those phases of his life, so we must train his spiritual life. The American spirit of freedom was found by Hus and Luther as they searched the Scriptures. We are agreed that the State must not attempt to interpret the Scriptures for its people, therefore the State can not complete the process of making Americans, but must depend upon the Church.

Where the Protestant Church has been at work among the immigrants, let us see the results of the leaven of Christ in their hearts.

In the winter of 1914 the name of Mrs. Orlikovski appeared on the calling list of the Church Visitor. Mrs. Orlikovski was the mother of a family of six children. She had been a Catholic, but before her marriage had given up the Church and had married an atheist. She had been reported to the Church Visitor as a prospective member of the Home Department of the Church. When the Visi-

tor was making her first call upon Mrs. Orlikovski, as she neared the door she heard loud voices, children crying, and a great confusion of other noises. As she stepped on to the back porch and peered into the kitchen, perfect bedlam met her gaze; children, wash tubs, dirty dishes, and a disheveled woman scolding at the top of her voice and using language unfit for children's ears. The Visitor could not remember what she had said during her brief visit but she was conscious of a great relief when she left. She recalled that she had asked Mrs. Orlikovski to come to the Home Department meeting for women the following afternoon in the church parlors. Mrs. Orlikovski had responded with a long excuse, the burden of which was that it was necessary for her to go to court regarding something a neighbor had done.

The Church Visitor was young and had not seen much of the seamy side of life. It looked like an impossible task to create high ideals in the heart of this woman. With such a dirty home, quarreling with her neighbors, and using such dreadful language, what kind of a citizen could she be and what hope was there for her children to become good citizens? It was almost revolting, but the visitor knew that the regeneration of this woman must take place.

Month after month and year after year the Church Visitor appeared at the back door of this home. Tirelessly she invited the mother to the Home Department and to the church and the chil-

dren to Sunday School, church clubs, and the Vacation Church School. The children came spasmodically, but their very irregularity showed a weakness in their training. When they did appear they were dirty and unkempt. The children attended the public schools but as soon as they were old enough they went to work. The entire family life was on a very low plane. The Visitor felt that the only solution for the condition was to give the mother a glimpse of something higher and better, in order that she might see her life in its true perspective.

At last, in the winter of 1919, an opportunity presented itself. In order to break down the barriers that kept many women from coming to the Home Department, small neighborhood meetings were held in the homes of the active members of the Home Department. Ten homes were selected for these meetings. To these meetings the women invited their neighbors for an afternoon party. The Pastor and Church Visitor attended each meeting and after the women had had a little visit a short prayer service was held followed by a question period. Mrs. Orlikovski attended one of these meetings and in the free conversation period demonstrated that with her the use of coarse language was not a lost art. The Bible lesson that day was "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." This was the first time that Mrs. Orlikovski had listened with understanding to the words of Christ. As she sat there among her neighbors a feeling she could not explain came into her heart.

She had a chance to quietly compare herself with the two neighbors who were Christians and she realized there was a difference which she wanted to overcome. When at the close of the meeting she was invited to attend the Home Department at the church parlors, modifying her language very much she replied, "Gosh! You bet I'll be there!" And she was there.

The Home Department had its usual effect upon Mrs. Orlikovski. "Gee! If I'd known it was like this I'd a come sooner. Mrs. Zlamal will come when I tell her about it!"

From that time on Mrs. Orlikovski became a faithful attendant of the Home Department. Her boys and girls, now growing up, began to come regularly to Sunday School. If the house was not in apple pie order when the Church Visitor made her regular monthly calls, Mrs. Orlikovski was confused and offered profuse apologies. Her daughters began coming to the young people's meetings and joined the girls' clubs. Soon one of the girls began to take piano lessons and another vocal lessons. The family bought three tickets for the church Lecture Course. Pretty center pieces began to appear on the tables in the home, the front door was unlocked, and the Church Visitor no longer made her calls in the kitchen among the washtubs but sat on a leather chair in the living room.

This change was going on for three years. At each Easter and Christmas time when a special effort was being made to bring men and women to

accept Christ, Mrs. Orlikovski was given a personal invitation and each time she refused. Finally, in the spring of 1923, at the pre-Easter consecration services, Mrs. Orlikovski, one of her sons and two of her daughters dedicated their lives to the service of Christ. On the night of her baptism the softening and refining process that had been going on in the life of Mrs. Orlikovski actually intensified, a certain modesty and dignity seemed to radiate from her. As she came up from the baptismal waters, the Church Visitor, who was waiting to assist her was reminded of the first time she had met Mrs. Orlikovski. As she pictured the contrast, she realized the power of the leaven of Christ in the heart of the immigrant. From a cursing, vulgar foreigner whose ideals were a menace rather than a help to American life, she stood before her a worthy citizen, a woman with the ideals of Christ, who had learned that freedom came through control. No civic institution had been able to save Mrs. Orlikovski, she had needed the Church.

Hundreds of stories, all different because human nature differs, might be told of the rebuilding by the Church of the spiritual lives of foreigners. It is a process that must take place in the life of every immigrant in order to make America safe for democracy.

c. The Challenge:

As the Slavic immigrant woman comes to our shores seeking a richer and fuller life, shall we deny her the object of her quest? Shall we look

upon the tired face and queer old country clothing with scorn and ridicule? Or shall we see in her a potential Christian American citizen? Shall we leave her alone to find the best in American life and then wonder why anarchy, atheism, materialism, and Bolshevism develop rapidly in American life and increasingly threaten its stability? Shall we permit the Slavic immigrant woman to interpret for herself the spirit of America? Or shall we, lovers of America, ardent believers in all the principles for which America stands, do our share to keep that spirit aglow as a beacon light to all the world?

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